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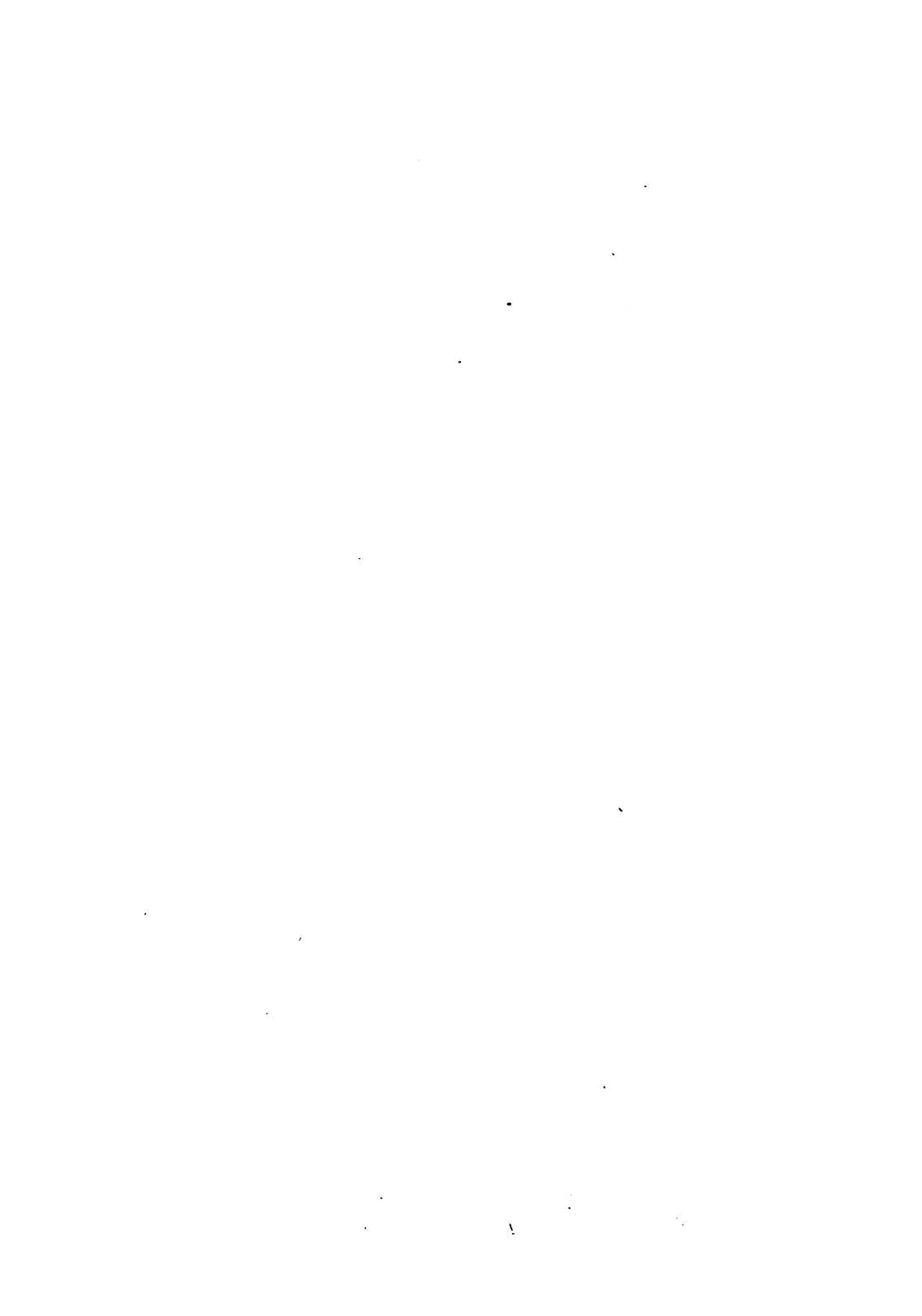
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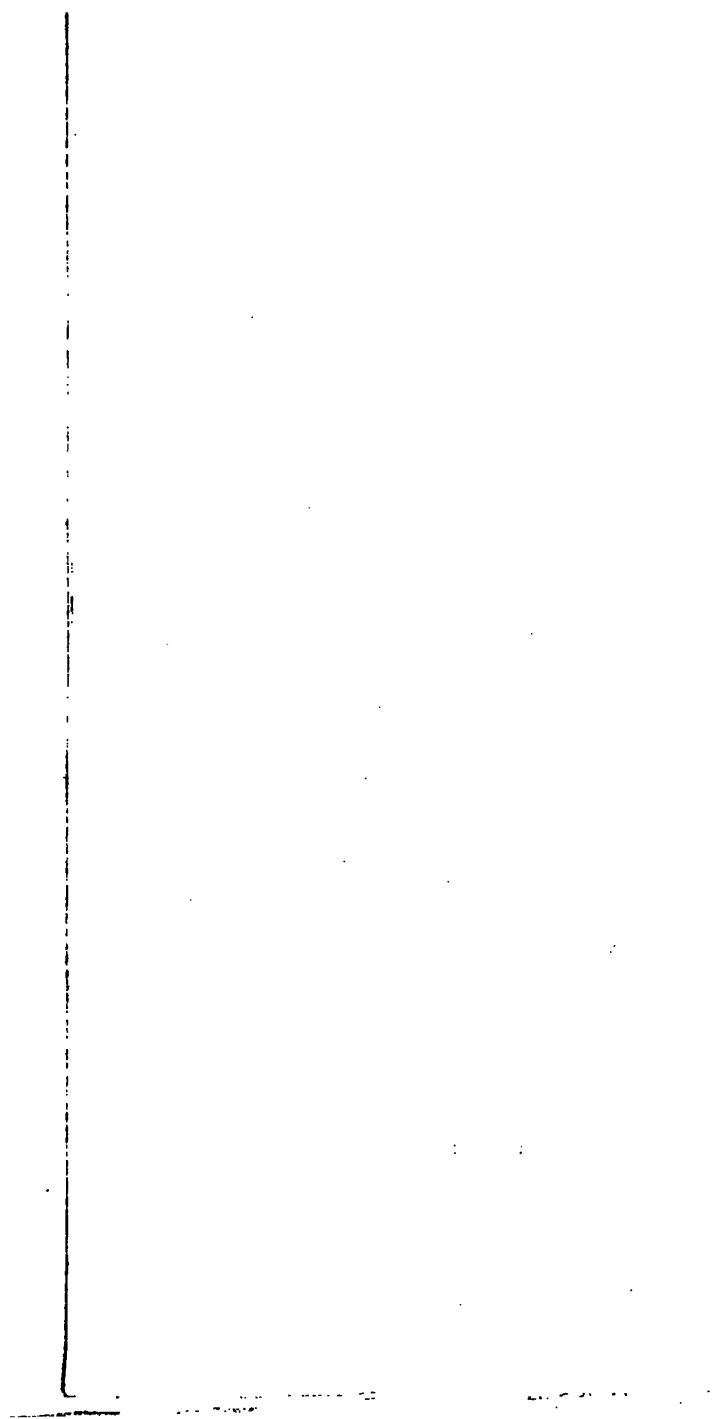
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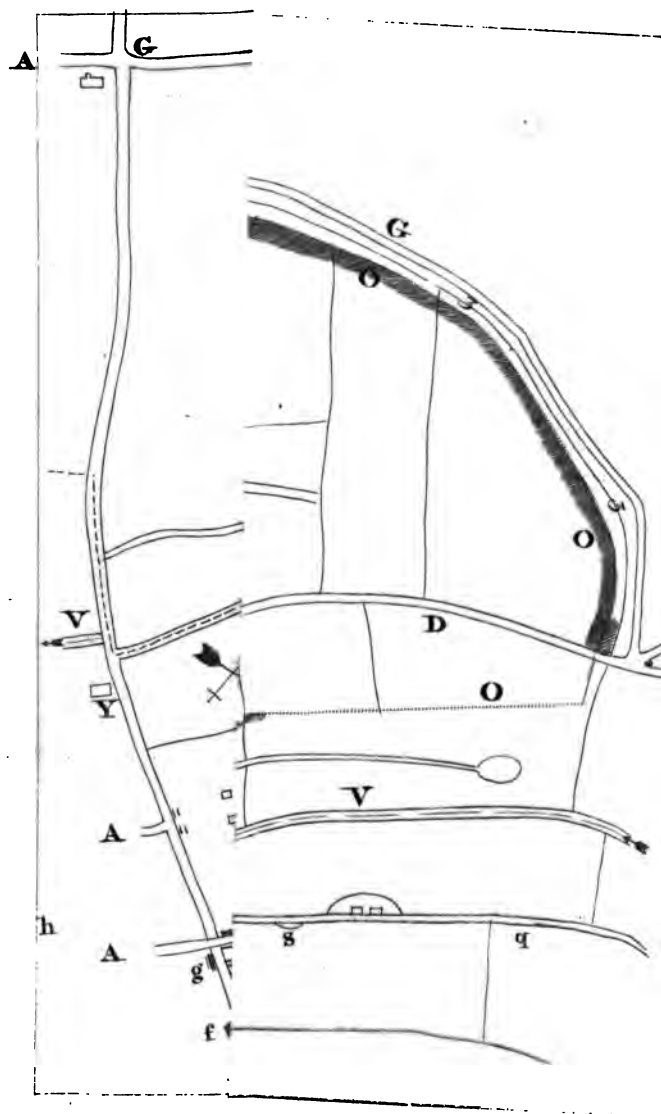
REFERENCES TO THE PLATE.

- A A A** Road to London.
- B** Road to Watford.
- C** Road to Luton.
- D** Road to Chester.
- E** Road to Gorhambury.
- F** Road to Childwick.
- G G G** The Watling-street.
- H** Road to Hemel Hempstead.
- I** The Abbey Church and Monastic Building
- K** St. Michael's Church.
- L** The Vicarage House.
- N** St. Michael's-street.
- O O O O** The Walls of the City of Verulam.
- P** Verulam Hills
- Q 1** Roman Road, dug up about 1800.
- Q 2** Roman Road, dug up 1818.
- Q Q Q Q** Vestiges of Roman Roads.
- R** The Place of St. Mary Magdalen's Chapel.
- S** Ditto of St. German's Chapel, founded by the Prior Ulfno, 945.
- T** Teselated Pavement found.
- V** The River banked out of the Fish-pool which washed the Walls of Verulam, and extended over the space **W W**.
- X** Town Hall.
- Y** Holywell House.
- Z** Rome Land.
- Shows the Corporation Boundary.
- a** The Abbey Court.
- b c d e** Dissenting Chapels.
- f** The Castle stood here.
- g** The Chequers Field and Inn.
- h** Key Field.
- i** The Lower Gate leading into the Abbey Court and Monastery at **Z**.
- k** The King's Stables.
- m** The Abbey Mill, now Silk Mills.
- n** Gorham Block.
- p** St. Michael's Pound.
- q** An ancient Road, called the Back Lane.
- r** Several Skeletons found, with lead frames, covered over, without bottoms.
- s** A Stone Coffin, with the Skeleton of a Female.
- z z z z** The Fosseway.





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AN
HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL
DESCRIPTION
OF THE
MUNICIPIUM
OF
ANCIENT VERULAM;
THE
MARTYRDOM OF ST. ALBAN;
FOUNDATION OF THE MONASTERY; OTHER RELIGIOUS
HOUSES THEREON DEPENDENT;
AND AN ABRIDGED
BIOGRAPHY OF THE SEVERAL ABBOTS;
INCLUDING
INFORMATION ON THE EARLY
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE KINGDOM;
FROM THE
RECORDS OF THIS PRIMARY MONASTERY.

PART I.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

BY FREDERICK LAKE WILLIAMS,
Author of "INVENTIONS & DISCOVERIES," &c.

ST. ALBANS,
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM LANGLEY.

1822.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
THE COUNTESS OF VERULAM.

MADAM,

DID not the softer virtues and the elegancies of urbanity adorn the person of the illustrious Individual addressed,—your Title, as derived from the greatest man which England has ever produced, would still claim the unqualified respect of every person who venerates the truly great name of the famous VERULAM. But since your Ladyship possesses those virtues which are an ornament to private life, as well as those which dignify Title,—you have no cause to regret the fame of the philosopher; as the lustre of the elegant and domestic virtues is more consonant to your character.

And since every object associated with the local scenes which the following sheets describe, is properly

connected with your Ladyship's Title;—claiming its sanction and support, as an offspring depends upon the protection of a parent: so, my Lady, permit the Compiler of this brief History of Ancient Verulam and Modern St. Albans to lay his labours at your Ladyship's feet,—whilst he hopes for the favor of your fostering protection.

I am, Madam,

Your Ladyship's most devoted and obedient

Humble Servant,

FREDERICK LAKE WILLIAMS.

**ST. ALBANS,
December the 24th, 1821.**

TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
THE COUNTESS OF VERULAM.

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I am, Madam,

Your Ladyship's most devoted and obedient

Humble Servant,

FREDERICK LAKE WILLIAMS.

ST. ALBANS,

December the 24th, 1831.

Without professing to be the apostles of credulity, or the champions of unbelief, we confess ourselves to believe in the faith of Christ, as established in these kingdoms ; further illustrative of our own character---we believe the probable,---admit the possible,---and concede that the power of the Highest has effected what lies infinitely beyond common observation, and has produced events, beyond the sphere of ordinary conception to vindicate His truth, and manifest His providence.

We know that many productions, the result of natural causes, have been viewed by men with minds under the influence of ignorance, ---as supernatural and miraculous, and which became the interest of others of their species, who were better informed, to confirm. As far as philosophical faith goes, we believe the universe and its components to be the produce of the Su-

preme power of the Creator ; that its preservation is effected by natural and secondary causes, these being directed by the Supreme in his general dispensations, and which are most conformable to the universal economy of nature ; and the general order of His works.

These circumstances are mentioned, not because they may be material ; but because the mental character is modelled by habit, its constitution liable to be directed, and its conduct influenced by the religious and philosophical faith of its possessor ; and also, because what passes through the medium of the mind, is subject to receive its most prevailing impression.

We congratulate our country generally, and the philosophical with the historical world in particular, that a certain Record, the original of which WE HAVE SEEN, has

been of late years discovered in the archives of St. DENNIS, in France ; a translation of which has been published within the last year, in the pages of that philosophical work, the ORIGINAL Monthly Magazine; and which proves beyond all contravention, by one of the surest tests of historical credence, namely, by co-existent and corroborative evidence, the truth of the chief events recorded by our ancient English chroniclers, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Robert of Gloucester, Matthew of Westminster, the Monk of St. Albans (Matthew Paris), William of Malmesbury, and others ; and which the incredulity of recent years hath condemned as fabulous. This discovery certainly affords us an opportunity to presume, if these have been found worthy of credit, that the facts professed to have been given by the pious, worthy and venerable BEDE, GILDAS, THEODORE BEZA, MATTHEW PARIS, and other ancient ecclesiastical historians, may in

the main, be accredited also. It hath been very ingeniously observed by one of the most judicious historians of the natural habits, customs, &c. of the modern Egyptians, we ever remember to have read, that ‘Although distance of time may have deprived ancient events of circumstantial precision, and extracted from them co-relative incidents, as they have so long furnished traditional report and nuncupative relation with materials, and have been as it were new-modelled in their progress through the medium of different minds’;—yet, he observes, ‘there is scarcely to be found a tradition, which has not had originally truth for its basis, although the original features may be obscured by the darkness and uncertainty of fable.’

In the perusal of the subsequent sheets, the observations we have already submitted may, perhaps, appropriately present a time-

ly assistance to the view of our readers ; we think they require their serious, sagacious, dispassionate, nay, candid and liberal consideration. The most favorable construction should, we think, be placed upon these relations, which have contributed more than any other cause, under the gracious Providence of Heaven, to improve the moral habits of the inhabitants of Europe, upon which their faith is built, on which they rationally lean for present protection, and fondly look up to, for future happiness.

The faith in Christ requires no support from our feeble pen ; it has the incontrovertible evidence of the object of a benign and merciful God, whose intention is thereby manifested, to procure the greatest portion of possible good to his creatures ; and which, we humbly conceive, the practice of Christian precepts, is the best qualified to produce to man.

Without entering in this place, on the defence of miraculous interposition, or endeavouring to prove the possibility of superhuman appearances to the extent we might reason upon them ; we only suggest, that, what is difficult of conception, cannot be well communicated ; and further, that the Supreme, who has all things, spiritual, as well as natural existences at his command, may be surely presumed to effect his gracious and superlatively great purposes, by whatever agency His wisdom sees best calculated to produce the END He proposes to establish ;—and that in the infancy of a religion meant to be universal, strange and supernatural means might be resorted unto,—to produce conviction on the pride of the human heart ;—therefore miraculous agency was, we conceive, resorted unto, for the most beneficial purposes, by the Great Author of the Universe.






A View of the Abbey Church, N. Wales.


Engraved by L. Brown for the Revue, 1771. Translated by G. Waller, 1771. W. Langley.

ANCIENT HISTORY OF ST. ALBANS.



SECTION 1st.

Preliminary remarks with a detail of circumstances which led to the foundation. Biographical memoirs of the founder, &c.



OF the origin of the protomartyr *St. Alban*, or *Albanus*, the Rev. Peter Newcome, in his erudite history of this foundation, observes in part I page 30. "If it be asked who this *St. Alban* was, to whose memory a royal and ample foundation should be erected, it is to be lamented that no account has been left of him, more than he was an eminent martyr for the christian faith, in the persecution set on foot about the year 303 and called the *Dioclesian* persecution; near 500 years before *Offa* founded the monastery.



A View of the Abbey Church, W. Mon.

Engraved by J. Lawrence for the History of Monks & Nuns, &c. &c. &c. by W. Lambton

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ANCIENT HISTORY
OF
ST. ALBANS.

SECTION 1st.

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B

“His name, imports him to have been a Roman, but we know not whether a man in high military command, or a great civil ruler, or in what rank of life he attained so high a character; but as he was a Roman and was put to death by imperial authority from Rome, it may be doubted whether his adherence to the christian faith, was the only crime laid to his charge; and whether there might not be some civil offence urged against him.” Which omission this author, in a note, in part supplies, saying *Gildas* states that *it was for sheltering and protecting the persecuted*. This, although not fully adequate to stop the chasm, to the most desirable extent, yet, it is submitted, affords a plausible pretext; for where the sovereign is a tyrant, a madman, or a brute,—inconsistent cruelty will prevail: and which characteristics are believed to have been united in the imperial Dioclesian,

The fame of Alban's piety, however, appears to have prevailed with *Germanus*, bishop of Auxerre, in France, about A. D. 453, and whose proximity, in point of time, (should that be thought important) might afford better means to ascertain this fact, than we can *now* arrive at; but that he collected the martyr's mortal remains, erected a shrine and a chapel

to his memory, history acknowledges. * The same motive in part, is said to have influenced *Offa*, the Saxon prince of *Mercia*, in the year 793, to procure the canonization of Alban, to erect a monastery and endow it with a copious liberality.

However we possess a manuscript, which, although it appears to be of legendary original, we shall venture to submit its leading features, because they seem to supply the *lacunæ* regretted by *Mr. Newcome*, with respect to this martyrdom, whatever appears mysterious,—let those who have faith, believe.

The manuscript, previous to the writer's description of the saint, says, "from him the Town derives its name, and the Abbey its dedication:—that he gives his name to a place in Dorsetshire, to another in Kent, and to various churches." By which, is to be understood, that he was the patron saint, to whom these religious edifices were dedicated.

"Albanus or Alban was born at the City of Verulam, and lived about the end of the third century. In his youth he was sent to Rome in company with one *Amphibalus*, a monk of *Caerleon*, in Wales,

* See M. Paris.

when at Rome, he became a soldier, and served seven years under the emperor *Dioclesian*; on his return to his native country, he settled at Verulam, and afterwards became a citizen and knight of that place. It is also agreed, that St. Alban suffered martyrdom, at the time of the great religious persecution, in the reign of *Dioclesian*; but authors differ as to the precise time of his death, some fix it in the year 286, some in 296, others reckon it among the events of 303 or 304.

The religion of Christ, was, (we believe, our memory may be trusted to make the assertion,) brought hither in the first century; * the christian church flourished much among the ancient Britons, previous to the period we now contemplate, that of the martyrdom of Albanus; which will account for religious establishments at *Caerleon*,—at the time: it reconciles those distinctions, which have been made between the primitive religion of the early British Church, when contradistinguished with the superstitions of Rome, introduced by St. Augustine among the Saxons.

* See the "*Trials of the Isle of Britain*," published in the *Cumbræ Britain*, vol. 1, where Christianity is said to have been introduced into this Island, by Brán Ab Llŷr, the father of *Curadog*, or *Curoclacus*.

But the legend of the martyrdom of *Albanus*, runs thus.—“During that severe persecution of the christians, Alban entertained and secreted his friend, *Amphibalus* in his house. The Roman governor being informed of this circumstance, sent a party of soldiers to apprehend Amphibalus, but Alban, (having privately sent him away,) then putting on the habit of his guest, presented himself in his stead, and was accordingly carried before the magistrate; the governor asked him of what family he was?—Alban replied, to what purpose do you enquire of my family?—If you would know my *Religion*? I am a Christian. Then being asked his name, he answered, my name is *Albanus*,—and I worship the only true and living God, who created all things!—The magistrate replied,—If you wish to enjoy the happiness of life,—delay not to sacrifice to the great Gods!—Alban answered, “The sacrifices you offer, are made to devils, neither can they help the needy, or grant the petitions of their votaries!—This answer so enraged the governor, that he ordered him to be immediately beheaded.”

But on his way to be executed, to a place, subsequently called by the Saxons *Holmskurste*, *Holnykurste*, *Holnyhurst* or *Holmsburst*, north

east from ancient Verolam to the point of elevation whereon stands the present Abbey, consequently the procession had to cross the river VER or MRUSE, over which was a bridge, so narrow as to admit only two a breastsaith *Chauncey*, "which was so thronged with spectators, that it was impossible to pass it. The saint, we are told, lifted up his eyes to Heaven, and prayed *that the waters might part*, and the stream was miraculously divided, and afforded a passage for himself and a thousand more persons.— This wonderful event converted the executioner on the spot, who throwing away his drawn sword, and falling at Alban's feet, desired he might die with him. This sudden conversion occasioned a delay in the execution, till another person could be found to perform the office."

Chauncey, also relates in this place, that Alban decked with flowers, and his face adorned with natural comeliness came to the top of a hill about two hundred paces from the river, and being thirsty, desired some water, and upon his prayer, (my author adds,) that a spring of water immediately gushed out of the earth at his feet, to the amazement of all who saw it, then the head of the most constant martyr, was separated from his body, and he re-

ceived a crown of immortal life, on the 20th of June, in the year 293; at the same instant, the eyes of the executioner dropped out of the sockets, and fell on the ground with the head of the martyr. After which the convert executioner appointed to perform this bloody part upon Alban, was also executed in the same manner, for refusing his office, and after whom *Aaron* and *Julius*, two other citizens of Verulam, suffered martyrdom with them."

The previously cited manuscript, professes to give a copy of the warrant for his execution, as written in the legend of his passion and martyrdom, translated by *Jacobus Varogine*, thus,—“In the
 “tyme of the Emperoure Dioclesyan, Albane, Lorde
 “of Verelamye, prince of Knyghts, and Steward of
 “all Brutayne, duryng his lif, hath despysed Jubyter
 “and Apollyn our goddes: (Jupiter and Apollo,) and
 “to them hath doo derogacy on, and disworschyp,
 “wherefor by the Lawe, he is judged to be deed by
 “the honde of somme Knyght, and the bodye to be
 “buried in the same place where his heed shall be
 “smyten of, and his sepulture to be made worshcyp-
 “fully, for the honoure of Knyghthode, whereof he
 “was prynce, and also the crosse which he bare,
 “and *sklavin** that he ware, shold be buied wyth

* A Palmer's Weed.

“hym, and his bodye to be closyd in a cheste of
 “leed, and so layed in his sepulture.—This sentence
 “hath the Lawe ordeyned bycause he hath renyed
 “oure principall Goddes.”

This manuscript further observes that the 17th of June, was the day appointed by the church, to be kept holy to his memory.*

It likewise notices, that the town in which this venerable pile is situated, is in the hundred of *Cashio*, a name derived from the Normans. So also, do we understand from it,—that the Saxons have since called it *Albaneston*, from the principal town. *Cashio* is likewise said to have been its ancient British name, having been the metropolis of the *Cassii* and the residence of the British king *Cas-sibelan*, or *Cassivelannus*.†

Since we shall have occasion in another part of our work, to notice the ancient state of this place, as well as of ancient Verulam, what has already appeared, shall for the present be sufficient : and we

* Bede says the British Christians erected a Church of admirable workmanship, and dedicated it to St. Alban in the reign of Constantine, son of Constantine the Great. The principal facts above related, are confirmed by evidence of the authority of both Chauncey and Newcome, the historians.

† Newcome.

shall proceed to furnish the relation of the occasion of the canonization of St. Alban, and to state what gave origin to the erection of the ancient monastery and present Abbey Church; which is extracted from credible authorities, one of which is Newcome: who took his materials, we presume, from *Matthew Paris*, who was a learned and very industrious monk of St. Albans, who is said to have been devoted to the service of God from his youth, that he embellished his excellent natural endowments with commendable erudition and much virtue, being an able handicraft, a writer, and painter, learnt all mechanic arts, as far as became an ingenious gentleman; but for the liberal sciences, he was perfectly knowing in them, being an elegant poet, a fluent orator, a smart logician, an accurate philosopher, a notable mathematician, a most renowned historian, a solid divine, and what is above the rest, of untainted integrity of life, renowned for innocence, and without guile. By order of Pope Innocent the fourth he reformed the monks of the diocese of *Norwich*, who had slackened in discipline. The same Pope in A. D. 1248 sent him into *Norway* to restore the monastery of *Holwy*. He was a sharp reprover of vice, a bold asserter of the liberties of his country, so zealous for his nation and its church, that he has been thought to have taken

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too much liberty to inveigh against the immediate taxations of the Pope, and even accused king Henry the third, for neglecting the English, and preferring foreigners before them. He had a good genius for writing history and took immense pains about it, reading all ancient historians, and collecting the best from them, which he digested into one vast volume, from Adam to William the conqueror. Then he wrote the history which he calls the *Greater*, beginning with Harold and William from the year 1066 to 1250, proposing to leave the remainder to posterior writers; yet whether he afterwards changed his mind or was commanded to continue it to 1259, we are not told.* The titles of his voluminous works are as follow: The history from the beginning of the world. The description of the world. His greater history from William to Henry the third. Additions to chronicles. His lesser history, being an epitome of the greater. CHRONICLES of the MONASTERY of ST. ALBANS. The lives and martyrdoms of the saints Alban and Amphibalus. The life of St. Edmond the Archbishop. The life of St. Gathlae, and the life of St. Wolstan. †

The character and public life of *Offa*, king of *Mercia* the founder of the Abbey, being material,

* He died at St. Albans, A. D. 1259.

† This Bishop died 1259.

as it is said the circumstances of his conjoining the kingdom of the East Angles to his own dominions, led to furnish the event which gave the origin to this foundation. Therefore Newcome has afforded details, from whence the materials for this purpose may be drawn, upon his authority we rely for whatever is subsequently advanced; except where any other historian's name is expressly given, the following may be concluded to be taken from that author:

Offa ascended the Mercian throne A. D. 755, he found the people whom he was to rule a warlike enterprizing nation: and such a people that a prince ambitious of territory would be desirous to command.—His own emulation is thought to have assimilated to the genius of his people, and it is admitted that he possessed a talent to atchieve empire, with strength and courage to maintain it, as may be collected from the subsequent detail. He appears not to have been wanting in those great military virtues which have ever been found to distinguish those eminent men, who have appeared at various periods in the world to be born for universal empire. Himself being well acquainted with the character of his own people, and properly estimating that of those with whom he had to contend. Courageous, bold, liberal,

enterprising, and eager of command; nor was he found to be wanting in the more noble and pious virtues which form the character of a man in higher relations; and who is conscious of his dependence upon the supreme Author of all good for those blessings he enjoys.—But since great vices are found to flourish in that soil where the greater virtues are generated; so is not the reputation of Offa free from the imputation of an offence found to be attendant upon ambition:— *treachery*, attended by blood; a crime, which in days of former ignorance was very common:—a crime, by which his fellow countrymen first had obtained the sovereignty of Britain,—when the unsuspecting native princes were each of them murdered by his fellow guest, at an hospitable entertainment at *Caer Caradog*. * So did this crime sully the fame of Offa, if general impressions are to be entitled to the credit given to common tradition: which offence of Offa, was perpetrated upon one of the brightest characters of Saxon princes, in the fell murder of the amiable and accomplished Æthelbert, by some called *Albert*, whilst he was paying his

* This was called the battle of *Longknives*, and was so called from the circumstances leading to the Treachery and Assassination here mentioned; from each of the Saxons being armed with such a weapon secured up his sleeve; and it was perpetrated, as it now presumed, near to *Stone Henge* on Salisbury Plain. See *Williams's* Lines of PATRIOTIC PRINCES, vol. 1. in *Vita Arthur*.

court to his, Offa's youngest daughter, the beautiful *Elynda*, at his royal palace, which is presumed to have been at a place called *Sutton*, to the north of Hereford.

However, *Chauncey*, furnishes a more amiable view of the character of Offa, since he attributes this diabolical action to his queen, *Drida*, also called *Quandrida*, who appears to have been moved by a similar spirit to that which influenced Lady Macbeth, who, when any cause, even of the tenderest moment, stood between herself and her ambition, hesitated not to remove it; so much is to be ascribed to accidental association, giving a peculiarity of trait to our manners: but to conclude our observation, we beg to illustrate it, by borrowing the energetic language of Shakspeare, with respect to the comparison existing between Lady Macbeth, and the queen of Offa, She

“who had given suck; and knew

“How tender ’twas, to love the babe, that *milk’d* her;

“*She* would, while it was smiling in *her* face,

“Have pluck’d her nipple from his boneless gums,

“And dash’d the brains out.”

From this circumstance, however, Offa appears to have participated in the hellish crime; inas-

much, as all agree he seized the vacant kingdom, and subdued its people by violence.—Afterwards, however, he sought to retrieve his character, and perhaps to appease the remorse of his conscience, by paying court to the clergy, and by practising all the monkish devotions, which in that age of ignorance and superstition were in the greatest esteem. He gave a tenth of all his goods to the church; presented rich donations, and by command of the Pope, founded the cathedral of Hereford, and even made a pilgrimage to Rome. In this place, he thought his riches and power would procure him absolution:—he offered the pope to maintain a college of English youths at Rome out of his revenues: and to that purpose, imposed a tax on every house possessing *thirty pence* a year, of one penny. Which imposition was levied at first and sent to Rome, and called *Peter's pence*; and as a donation, it was so afterwards continued to be sent,—though subsequently claimed as of *right* by that see; however it was afterwards annulled in 1534, by an act of parliament, which abolished all procurations, delegations, and dispensations from the bishop of Rome. This tax was also known as *ROME SCOT*, said by *Rapin* to be attributed to Ina, the illustrious king of Wessex, for the above purpose and that Offa only extended this tax over his

own kingdom. His journey to Rome was made in 791; and here in expiation of his sins, he undertook to build a stately church and monastery to the memory of ST. ALBAN. On his return in this same year, he set about the work, and died A. D. 794.

Chauncey states that the murder of the unfortunate Æthelbert, or, as he calls him, ALBERT, was perpetrated by the queen consort of Offa,—*Drida*;—relating that the young prince was of great learning, very charitable, delighted in good works, wise in counsel; merciful in judgment, and sober in speech. These qualifications encouraged Offa to propose the match, Æthelbert valued the offer as a great honor, which incited him to make an address at Offa's court, where he found a noble reception; but queen *Drida*, felt with anger, and full of wrath, grieving that the prince should be so acceptable to the king and his people, and enraged that her wicked arguments should not prevail to send this daughter beyond the seas, to be disposed of at her pleasure: she cursed the bishops, * who were the authors of it, and vented her poisoned malice against king Albert.

* *Humbert* Archbishop of Lichfield, and *Unwora* Bishop of Dorchester.

Offa, ignorant of these things, never suspecting her malice, verily believed she was well pleased with it, till such time that the king advising with her, how, and when these things should be accomplished; she unexpectedly answered, "Behold, God hath this day delivered thy enemy into thy hands, if thou be wise, be murdered;—who conceals his treason against thee, * desiring whilst he is young and eloquent to supplant thee, now an old man, of thy kingdom, and moreover to vindicate the wrong which he and many others have suffered, (as he boasts,) whose kingdoms and possessions thou hast unjustly spoiled;" with these and more words to a like effect.

This, much disturbed the king in his mind; he gave no credit to her, but with great indignation answered almost in the words of Job,—“Thou speakest like one of the foolish women; begon from me, begon, I abhor so villainous an act,—which done,—would be a blot to me and my successors for ever, and the sin would return upon my family with great revenge;” with these few words the angry king left her, detesting such wickedness in the woman.

* As it is reported.

But when his troubled thoughts were somewhat allayed, and these things concealed ; both the kings sat at table to dinner, where they ate and drank together with pleasure ; and when their appetites were satisfied, they rejoiced all day with great mirth, in timbrels, drums, harps, songs, and dances.

“Whilst the malicious queen, retaining her wicked purposes in mind, commanded a chamber to be richly furnished with tapestry, and silk hangings after a princely manner, wherein king Albert, might take his repose at night, and caused the kings couch to be prepared and garnished with noble trimmings, beset on every side with curtains ;—directing withal, a deep ditch to be made under the chamber to effect her wicked purposes.

“The queen still dissembling her villainous design, with a serene countenance entered the palace, and that she might make as well king *Offa* as *Albert* merry, and joking with him, whilst he suspecting no ill : said “Son, I am come with an earnest expectation to see my daughter married to thee in my chamber, that your future loves may be renewed with most pleasing discourses :”—and under this disguise she invited king Albert, who, poor prince !

not dreaming of any ill contrivance against him, immediately followed the queen to her chamber; whilst king Offa staid behind, not mistrusting the least mischief; king Albert being gone with the queen, all the soldiers who followed at their heels, were shut out; and when he expected the young princess, the queen said, "she is called, sit down my son till she comes; and when he had sat in a memorable seat, set forth with delicate furniture, longing for the delightful company of the princess, the innocent prince dropped suddenly through a trap door into a deep ditch, where he was strangled by the executioner, whom the queen had hid there; and she, and her wicked instruments immediately smothered him, with bolsters, cloths, and curtains, so that none could hear him cry: thus this elegant young king and martyr, Albert, was himself, being innocent, destroyed without offence, and received a crown of glory.

"When the most beautiful Elfrida heard these things she abhorred the villainy and detestable wickedness of her mother,—bemoaning the loss of the unfortunate king, and slighting all the pomp and vanity of this world, took upon her a religious habit, that she might follow the martyr; whilst the

queen glorying in her cruelty caused the head of prince Albert to be severed from his body, because it seemed that he breathed, and his body was ignobly burnt by the executioner.*

"After this action of the vile queen Drida, she counterfeited a great passion of grief, threw herself down upon her bed, feigning she was sick at her heart, confined herself to her chamber. When king Offa learnt the truth thereof, his heart was overcome with grief, and he, lamenting the villainous act, with a vehement passion, shut himself up in his inner chamber, refusing meat and drink almost for three days, drowning his soul in tears, afflicting his heart with lamentations and fasting, and cursing the wickedness of his wife, banished her from his bed, and inclosed her in a private place, where she might bewail her sins all the days of her life: and when she had lived four years in confinement, she had all her silver and gold taken from her, and was drowned in a deep well. In the mean while *Humbert*, archbishop of Litchfield, solemnly buried the remains of the body of king Albert at his church at Litchfield,

* Thus was Ethelbert slain,—“even by his host, who should against his murderer shut the door, nor borne the knife himself:—nor even could his virtues, though angel-like, and pleading trumpet tongued, against the deep damnation of his taking off,” prevent it.

where all the deacons and clerks performed the obsequies. The ashes, fourteen years afterwards, were removed to Hereford, where they were buried in a church dedicated to *Ethelbert the martyr*.

But when king Offa had received some consolation and comfort from the holy bishops, who were well satisfied in his innocence, touching this murder, he under pretence that he was the next heir, *wisely* consolidated the kingdom of the East Angles with his own.

But whilst he was thus busied with careful thoughts, how he might expiate this treacherous and base murder of king Albert, he thought as he slept one night upon his couch in the city of BATH that an angel appeared to him from Heaven, and admonished him that he should search for ALBAN, the holy saint of God, and the protomartyr of the English and Britains, and should lay up his relics in a chest: and studying how he might perform this divine command, he imparted it to *Ceolwolfe and Unwan* his suffragan bishops who explained the same to him; then the archbishop taking the suffragan bishops and a great number of people with him, met the king on a day appointed at VERULAM, where he

beheld the beams of a light to shine, after the manner of a great torch, darting from Heaven upon the place of his sepulchre; which miracle, all the people beholding, rejoiced and were fully satisfied with the truth of the vision: then king Offa caused the bones of this holy man to be taken up* and put in a shrine, adorned with gold and precious stones, and held a parliamentary council at Verulam, where archbishop Humbert, his suffragans, and all his chief governors of cities, diligently and effectually treated together of selecting a convent of monks, building a monastery, and endowing it with great and royal privileges, in the place where he found the relics of the protomartyr, and which he consecrated with his own blood: and relying upon the wholesome advice of his great lords, he also took a painful journey to *Rome*, where *Adrian* the bishop, understanding the reason of his coming thither, received this penitent prince with the like joy, as the father did the prodigal son."†

The last cited author, as well as the former, in a subsequent observation, unite in observing that the wicked contrivance of seizing the kingdom of the

* In the month of *August*, 793.

† Chauncey.

murdered prince, and putting him to death, in violation not only of all rights of hospitality, but of all laws human and Divine,*—was suggested by his wife and consort Drida, whom in abhorrence of her crime he caused to be thrown headlong into a well, because that was the punishment she had devised against the virtuous Ethelbert. This woman† had been a relation to the king of France; and for some heinous crime had been condemned to die; but in compassion to her sex, she was put to sea in an open boat without sails or rudder, and left to live or perish at the mercy of the waves; when at length she was taken up by some English seamen, brought to land, saved from her horrid doom of perishing by sea: Offa was struck with her adventure, conceived a passion, and married her; she was therefore called *Quendrida* or *Queen Drida*, but she called herself *Petronilla* or *Parnel*. Within the two first years she bore sons, the eldest Egfrid, who succeeded to the throne; and then she bore three daughters, the eldest of whom, the king gave to Brithic, the king of the west Saxons, the next to Ethelbert, king of the east Angles, when he was murdered, as before stated.

* M. Paris.

† M. Paris, in his additions to his great work.

This monarch was regarded so potent in the beginning of his reign, and beheld so formidable by all his neighbours, the other Saxon princes, that they confederated and sought an alliance with the king of France to assist them if attacked, Matthew Paris has the letter for that purpose preserved; these were the kings of Kent, of the West Saxons, the Northumbrians, the South Saxons, and the East Angles. In which letter they complain of his pride, insolence, and crafty designs, and accompany the letter with one thousand pieces of gold. Charles, the French king accepted the present, and sent to Offa a letter, by way of answer, "*commanding him to desist from disturbing Britain, and forbear to subjugate by any sort of means, the kings who bordered upon him, and who had lately united themselves to him; that on such an attempt, he would FEEL Charles, who was formidable to every mortal,—hostile to him.*"

Offa assembled his nobles and captains; and in a speech accused the kings and Charles of conspiring to ruin them, and overturn the kingdom of Mercia. "But now is the time," saith he, "when Charles is employed in foreign wars; let us fall on our enemies, and cast them down never to rise more." And he instantly marched with his army, to attack the

king of the East Angles.—A bloody fight ensued at a place then called *Feldhurd*, and Offa gained a victory. Charles, or Caroloman at this time died in Saxony; and his brother, afterwards called Charlemagne, succeeded to his dominions. The Saxon princes in Britain renewed their alliance with him, and he answered with high threats to Offa. The consequence was, that Offa marched against the king of Kent, and obtained a great victory at *Otford*, wherein the Kentish monarch was slain: and Offa took possession of his kingdom. He then turned his army against Kenulph, king of the West Saxons, who secured himself and confederate princes in a great castle at Bensington in Oxfordshire: in which they defended themselves, and had a great army in the field. The latter was completely vanquished, and the former in a few days after surrendered. The king, having escaped by favor of the night. They fled with all possible speed to *Mermod* or *Mafyn*, the king of Powis in Wales; and were there sheltered and protected. Offa wrote to that prince, charging the kings with plots, conspiracy and rebellion, against him, their true and legal sovereign, (because some of them had before been vanquished by Offa, or his ancestors;) concluding that Marmod would involve himself in the same calamity for affording them assistance. The king,

Marmod,) and his nobles assembled, and having read the letter, concluded their consultation that—
 ‘ the *powerful* king of Wales, ought by no means to fear the *little* king Offa, who was silly, mad, and possessed by the Devil.” *Marmodium potentem, Offam Regulam desipientem et arressitum minime devere formidare.* And Marmod charged the ambassador of Offa with this answer : assigning as his reason, “ that it would be an act of dishonor and timidity to desert those who were worsted, when he had taken them under his protection, and shewn them compassion ; and that if Offa should presume to attack them, he would arm the whole force of Wales in their defence.”

Offa to whom defiance was an incentive to courage; in consequence of this vaunting message, instantly sent troops to take possession of those kingdoms which had been abdicated by their recreant sovereigns, by securing all the strong posts, to preclude every possibility of return. In the mean time himself marched at the head of a formidable army against the Welch potentate, and the fugative princes, and having engaged, gave them eventually a severe and cruel defeat. This event happened a few days before the feast of our Lord’s nativity, when Marmod pro-

posed the following stratagem to his chiefs and allies : that they should offer a truce to Offa during the succeeding solemnity ; when if the Saxons should be rendered careless, and put off their guard, he would fall on them by night, and exterminate the whole army of Offa. The treachery was approved : the truce being proposed to Offa, it had his consent ; yet neither army made any retreat, Offa, then for the better security of his army and by the consent of the hostile party, caused a long and deep trench to be dug with a very high bank on the East side of England to prevent any sudden incursion from the Britons. And for the more safe and quiet celebration of divine offices in such a season of solemnity, he built a small church. All which transactions were completed in twelve days, and those of the shortest ;—the trench was known as *Offa's dyke*, and the church, called Offkirke, even to this day saith *Matthew Paris*.

The place of these transactions is not mentioned ; but it is certain that it was near the present dyke, and most probable, towards the southern end thereof ; very likely to have been Lantwardine in the north of Herefordshire ; * where two camps are very dis-

* A place situated between Ludlow and Wigmore ; about 20 miles to the north of Hereford.

ting with the river Teme between them, here are also marks of the dyke, this conjecture, is said, to be more probable, because it is not far distant from the palace of Offa, called *Sutton* previously mentioned. Indeed, no such place as Offkirke, is said at this day to be found here ; yet it is alleged, that Warwick, or Offchurch near it was the place of those memorable exploits : although some say Warwick was founded by Marmond, the father of Offa. Camden says here was a palace of Offa ; and that it was the place where *Frenum* his son was basely murdered.

The stratagem of Marmod received every preparation he thought necessary, to the perfection of his design ; and on the night following Christmas day, when Offa and his army were resigned to sleep, and in conceived security,—these combined kings made a fierce attack. Having previously employed the men of the country to level the ditch, and thus facilitate their passage. The conflict was bloody and severe to the Saxons, great numbers were slain, and Offa retreated, having sustained a loss which rendered reinforcement necessary. The next year, however, he took post at the same place, faced the enemy with new, well appointed and numerous troops ; the Britons assembled on the same spot, thinking it lucky

and propitious to them, engaged Offa with great fierceness and in numerous bodies. A very bloody contest followed, the Britons were routed, the very plain was dyed with blood,—the victor gave orders to slay all men and infants, nor scarcely was mercy shewn to the women : an order, which because given by the king in the bitterness of his rage and in extreme fury, was executed with unheard of slaughter. Those who had been so slain, were however buried together with his own men in the ditch which the enemy had leveled, and he caused all holy offices over their bodies to be performed, and mass likewise to be celebrated for them in common.

This exploit occurred in the year 775, having spent about ten years in these several military expeditions, in which he had at length defeated and worn down all his adversaries. In which year, he is said,* to have founded a monastery at Bath ; afterwards demolished by the ravaging Danes, and subsequently rebuilt by *Elphage* its bishop, eventually archbishop of Canterbury, about A. D. 980.

The king of France, who had menaced Offa in the terms we have previously seen, upon his entering

* By William of Malmsbury.

into alliance with the petty princes of Britain, and who *M. Paris*, calls Charles, probably was Caroleman brother of Pepin, or perhaps Pepin himself; because the great Charles, or Charlemagne who afterwards became emperor, was not even king of France till 771. But it is observed, that whoever he was, he took no other steps to assist his allies in Britain, besides the letters we have seen. However, on the succession of Charles the great, who was at that time employed in Italy, and after he had vanquished the Lombards, and made captive their king Deriderius, in 774 Offa sent him ambassador in form, bearing presents of great value. *Alcuinus*, a scholar of the amiable and venerable *Bede*, being entrusted with this mission, a chief object of which, was to settle terms of peace. He was detained by the emperor, and so highly favored by that mighty prince that he received instruction from him, as a preceptor; by his advice the emperor founded the universities of *Paris* and *Pavia*, and the same *Alcuinus* died abbot of *St. Martyn at Tours*, A. D. 790. Offa had likewise sent to the emperor a letter wherein he requested his friendship. To these Charlemagne replied on terms of civility and high compliment, styling himself the most potent of christian kings in the east, and Offa, as the most puissant of those in the

west. Those letters he accompanied with presents and gifts: but he never mentioned the affairs of Britain.

Deriderius the Pagan king of the Lombards, whom Charlemagne had conquered, his generals and the chiefs of the vanquished Saxons, and many of their followers had taken the vow of christian baptism.

The preceding intimation, aided and encouraged by the general tranquillity of the kingdom, and perhaps of the European world, induced Offa to turn his attention towards making some regulations and alterations in episcopal matters, and this influenced the alterations he saw good to make in the then already established sees of his bishops. Since Lambert, then archbishop of Canterbury, had been thought to have his see too near the dominions of foreign powers; and he had been charged in the presence of the king, with having promised Charles, before the late confederacy of the kings, that if he would enter Britain with hostility and come to their aid, he should find free admission into his archbishoprick, with all possible favor, and assistance. Another motive with Offa, was found in his superstition,—that where he had triumphed with glory over his enemies, there, or

near that place, would the primacy or archiepiscopal seat, be most properly set up; and most devoutly revered. He, therefore, sent to pope *Adrian*, proper messengers and presents, requesting "that his holiness would appoint, the bishop of Litchfield * named *Ealdulph* to be an archbishop, and that all "provinces of the Mercians might be subject to this "prelate." The pope consented; and *Ealdulph* received the pall from Rome: but by this division we are not to understand, that the whole power of the archbishop of Canterbury was abolished.—This see was not removed to Litchfield; but a third archiepiscopal see, was established, in addition to those of Canterbury and Eboricum.—Lambert still exercising archiepiscopal jurisdiction over the bishopricks of London, Rochester, Winton and Shriburn. Upon the death of *Ealdulph*; *Humbert*, the before named, was appointed to succeed him in all his functions: *Humbert* had been chaplain to the king; his confessor was privy to all his counsel and secrets, and was also styled the *Informatum Novum*, or Recorder of his words. In the time of this prelate, he begged the body of the martyr *Ethelbert*, and deposited the same in Litchfield cathedral, where it was interred with a

* Though contrary to ancient and approved usage.

due honors, but the ever restless spirit of superstition did not suffer it to remain there, it was afterwards carried to Hereford, and then buried with a church erected over his ashes, and dedicated to his memory.

The king had now attained to old age, had associated his son, as regent with him, and was passing his days in tranquillity, when he conceived an intention of founding a monastery; and proposed to endow the same by giving it the manor of Winslow,* where he was then dwelling. He had it seems, many places of residence, as may be judged from his name being connected with numerous local spots in the kingdom, as if having been, originally, his exclusive property, *i. e.* Offley, in Hertfordshire, Offington, in Berkshire, Offton, in Warwickshire, Offton, in Suffolk, High Offley, in Staffordshire, &c.

ORIGIN OF THE MONASTIC LIFE.

The persecutions which the church had suffered at various periods in its infancy chiefly from the idolatry of the Roman emperors, had driven its disciples to seek quiet and repose in the climes of Asia

* Buckinghamshire.

and the deserts of Egypt. In the latter place, particularly;—about A. D. 210 a severe persecution having raged against the disciples of Christ under Decius the emperor; certain pious men, the chief of whom were *Paul*, and *Anthony*, retired to Egypt, in its deserts they found safety, and enjoyed that quiet so essential to spiritual devotion, as well as mental contemplation. And, indeed in a hot climate and luxuriant soil, there was something so inviting for this kind of life, it is thought much more than motives of religion: although these served for the ostensible object. This kind of life grew soon into repute, and the fame of its sanctity, rapidly extended into other countries. In a later period, the days of the Croisades, the rage for visiting the holy sepulchre raised similar associations in Asia, for the entertainment of pilgrims, employed upon that holy errand. *Isidore* bishop of Alexandria, is said to have carried the same practices into the Greek church, it soon extended into the western or Latin church;—and *Martin* carried it into France. Hence the origin of monastic establishments in that country, yet Britain received hers from the east, as has been shewn.

In which last country, we have mention of only two monasteries previous to the time when Augus-

tine was sent by the pope with forty monks to the king of Kent, A. D. 596, to instruct himself and people in the doctrines of christianity. The natives of this island had certainly taken a more noble view of the doctrines of the christian system, to unite practical utility with the duties of religion, was their object, they had accordingly disclaimed the idleness of a cloister, preferring the *secular* to monkish habits; therefore there were, as has been said, only two monastic establishments here,* *i. e.* *Glastonbury*, Somersetshire, and *Banchor*, in Cheshire, which last was the first founded by *Congellus*, a Briton by birth, who became the first Abbot, A. D. 530.† Bede says it was founded by *Lucius* for christian philosophers, and continued for three hundred and fifty years, until *Congellus* changed it into a convent of monks. Considering the rooted enmity the Romans had to the principles of Druidism, it is not, we submit, impossible that even before the æra of Constantine, this first had being, near to that ancient university of Druidical learning, for the sake of establishing a seminary for the instruction of British youth to supply the place of that school in *monasteries* which the enemy had destroyed: its principles were also diametrically opposite to

* Besides Sherborne in Dorset. † Hanmer's Chron. of Ireland, p. 53.

† See a previous note p. 12, referring to the instance of *Brán ab Llyr*.

Druidical instruction. Here was trained up *David* the patron saint of Wales, the founder of the archiepiscopal see now known by his name. *Dubutus*, of saint Davids, also, the founder of Landaff cathedral, had his education: as had *Julilus* the reported bishop of Carleon; with many other eminent Britons,* as *Asaph*, *Petrue*, and *Patern*, which are to be considered among eminent British christians, before the settlement of the Saxons in this island; and from its existence perhaps, we are to attribute the superior antiquity of Welch churches, to that of ecclesiastical establishments in England.† This establishment, was famous for its magnitude, its ruin, and melancholy catastrophe.—Banchor contained in it above two thousand monks, and occupied a large city, when Ædelfred, king of the East Angles, fighting against the Britons, put to death one thousand two hundred monks for assisting their brethren and countrymen. This happened about A. D. 613; although it has been placed by some, a few years earlier, and those consider Augustine as having instigated the king to exercise this degree of cruelty upon them. But he seems to have died some years

* Here were also educated the very celebrated *Cadog* the *Socrates Confucius*, or *Zoroaster* of ancient British Wisdom, who had the celebrated *Ancourin* and *Taliessin*, the *Homer* and *Pindar* of British poetry, among his fellow students. † Warrington's History of Wales.

before: nothing else is said of this famous place;— but from its situation and dignity, it appears to have been the university as it were, or the place of general education, for the Britons of these parts, both before the Saxons came, and until its decay and final ruin; which followed by degrees from the tyranny of Ædelfred, and the cruel revenge which he had taken.

The monastery of *Glastonbury*, was founded about three hundred years after Christ, it had grown great and opulent; was much augmented and its church rebuilt by king Ina, A.D. 725, and it still maintained a high credit in the time of Alfred, and the same in all succeeding ages, till its final downfall and dissolution; when it was found, to have the largest revenue of any religious foundation in England, being £3,311.7s.4d. *per annum*: a cogent reason for its dissolution.

At the period of the Saxon invasion, the land was remarkable for its obedience to the religion of Christ, most parts had received the instruction of its Bishops and Priests, who were settled in a regular method; though not so numerous as in after times. But the most singular fact is, perhaps, to observe how speedily the Saxon kings, and chiefs, became converts to the same religion, in principle, which their subjugated people

had preferred, the truth is, however ascertained, fortunately, for the sake of reason, to prevent the unnecessary introduction of miraculous agency, when it is known that this is to be ascribed to the gentle influence of their wives : when Ethelbert himself, then king of Kent received Augustine and his retinue of priests, by whom we find he was instructed or persuaded to embrace the faith by his queen, *Bertha*, who was the daughter of *Lothaire*, king of France, and had been previously bred a christian in her father's court. Here we have the doctrine of St. Paule established ; who says a religious wife shall sanctify her husband. And as the best proof of female sincerity, or else, as the most meritorious work they could perform, they generally founded monasteries ; of which foundations we find about sixteen or seventeen to have been erected and endowed before Offa's foundation, and of these, some of the most remarkable were,

	A. D.		A. D.
1st. Rochester, founded in and	600	5th. Dorchester, with an episcopal see, by Cinigilife, and king of the West Saxons, and Oswald, king of the Northumbrians.	635
2nd. Canterbury, (both at the persuasion of Austin)	- 605	6th. Boston, by Botwolphus.	- 654
3rd. Tewksbury, by Odo and Dodo, Earls of Gloucester.	- 615	7th. Peterborough, by Peda, when the Mercians received christianity.	- 655
4th. St. Swithin, Winchester by Kenewulch, king of the West Saxons who also built the cathedral.	- 634	8th. Malsbury, by Elen-therius and Aldhelm, bishops of Winton.	- 670

	A. D.		A. D.
9th. & 10th. Barking, and Chertsey, by Erkenwald, bishop of London.	- 680	15th. Abingdon, by Cissam, king of the West Saxons.	- 740
11th. Gloucester, by Osric, king of the Northumbrians	- 680	16th. Minchinley, Somerset, by a king of the West Saxons.	- 744
12th. Eversham, by Egwine, bishop of Worcester, and Kenred son of Wolphus.	- 700	17th. Winchcomb, Gloucestershire, by Kenulph, king of the West Saxons, (vanquished & dethroned by Offa.)	- 787
13th. Bardney, Lincolnshire, by king Oswald	- 712	18th. Glastonbury, reformed by Inn.	- 795
14th. Croyland by Ethelbald, king of Mercia.	- 716		

From this list it will be seen that monastic establishments, had their rise chiefly from the time of Augustine, though those of *Banchor*, *Glastonbury*, and *Sherborne*, had, as previously observed, an anterior origin :—yet it should appear these must be considered in a different light, from those which followed. Being places of christian, as well as scientific institution; and consequently a species of universities, where the arts then known were taught. They also sent forth instructors, and preachers into places where the people wanted them; although these persons so qualified, were free from the authority of bishops, of whom no traces were then to be discovered,* in those very early times. Whereas, when Augustine came to convert, (as he professed) the Pagan Saxons to Christ, it is quite evident that his ostensible motive,

* Of the authority of those in more recent days,

which may be collected from his practice, was rather to introduce the dominion of the see of Rome, embracing not only its doctrines of papal supremacy, its assumed privileges, and its high pretensions; but also to teach the church to obtain an ascendancy over both the princes of the land and their people, and to gain not only the preponderancy over their consciences, but to direct the disposition of their property and other temporal concerns.—Such were the views of this missionary, and to warrant this conclusion, we refer to the universal practices of those dignitaries of the Romish church, who have had existence in that and every subsequent age. He came, accompanied by a train of forty monks,* with all the gaudy vestments of that imposing religion, and the external apparatus of Roman worship:—however, in justice we should add, that he brought with him all the learning and improved science which Rome then afforded. A knowledge of civil laws, with all those other arts she possessed, to civilize mankind, and to teach them mere conveniences of living: with this view he recommended the foundation of monasteries as the places for the nursery, and where the maturity of those arts, would be best perfected: as well also

* Some writers say to the amount of One Hundred.

for the setting forth a more exemplary worship and devotion.

It should be here remarked, although the observation may be thought irrelevant, but on mature consideration, to what hereafter follows, its application to our present theme—*monastic establishment* will be obvious, that in the very year which Gregory sent Augustine hither, a large monastery of Benedictines at *Cassino* was destroyed by the Lombards;* the mention of the event of Cassino, though it should seem foreign to English history, was discovered to effect the English church. Of which the compilers of the Saxon chronicles were conscious when they speak of it among *English* events.† Such was the case, although the letters of Gregory the great, place the event some years anterior to that catastrophe. Yet as to its identity, they say, “it was the monastery of “monk Cassino in Campania, founded by St. Benedict sixty years before, and enriched with great donations, that it was pillaged by Zotto, the first Lombard duke of Benevento in Samnium.” It may be noticed that this pope Gregory, himself, had been

* See Saxon chronicle in the year 595, (this chronicle was compiled at the end of Stephen's reign.)

† See Gibson's Edition of Saxon Chronicles.

brought up a Benedictine monk, and belonged to the monastery of St. Andrew, in Rome.

A doubt cannot exist that the monastery at Ban-
 chor was found by Augustine and his monks to be
 very adverse to their plan of government, since it is
 very evident that the papal missionary made preten-
 sions to a design unknown to the British clergy, as
 is illustrated by a passage found in Chauncey,—
 AUGUSTINE, after he was made metropolitan of
 Britain, held a council at *Augustines Acre* or *OAK* in
 WORCESTERSHIRE, that he might be near the British
 bishops and clergy, then residing in WALES, whom
 he summoned thither; Augustine demanded from
 them obedience to the bishops of Rome, and the re-
 ception of the Roman ceremonies into the British
 church. The Britons strongly opposed it, for that
 they could not lay aside their ancient customs with-
 out the consent and free leave of their whole nation,
 and thereupon desired that another synod might be
 called because their number was small. This agreed,
 seven British bishops and many learned men went
 from this monastery, called BANCORNABURG, over
 which abbot *Dinoth* presided; in their way an holy
 and wise man, who lived like an Anchorite, advised
 them if *Augustine* should rise up when they came

near him, he was the servant of God, and they ought to hear him; but if he should sit still and shew no respect, when they were more in number; then said he,—he is proud, and comes *not* from God, in such case ought not to be regarded. “They appeared before *Augustine* and observed that he still sat in his chair, without shewing any courtesy or respect to them, and they were very angry; and discoursing among themselves, said, if he will not now rise up unto us, how much more will he condemn us when we are subject to him?—Then *Augustine* renewing the old contrivance, exhorted them earnestly to embrace the rights and usages of the church of Rome; but they were so fixed to their own traditions and customs, that they would not exchange them, without the leave and licence of their church; and Abbot *Dinoth* plainly told him, “they owed no more to him whom he called Pope of Rome, and would be styled Father of fathers than obedience of love and brotherly assistance, which was due to every Godly christian: for they were under the government of the bishop of *Caerleon* upon *Ush*, who, under God, was to oversee and guide them; and they could no more change the rights and usages of their church without his leave, than *Augustine* could alter the customs of the Romish church without the authority of his bi-

shop. Then Augustine desired their conformity in three things, *first*, in the observation of Easter,* *second*, in the administration of Baptism, *third*, in their assistance in preaching to the English Saxons. But when he could not obtain their compliance with him in these things; he threatened them that if they would not accept peace with his brethren, they should receive war from their enemies; and because they would not preach the way of life to the English people, they *should* suffer by their hands the punishment of death." It should appear that this Augustine did by no means adhere to the *letter* of his mission furnished by the Pope, who advised him to proceed with moderation, in the affairs of the church; for there were different customs in various churches, and he ought not to impose the Roman rites themselves every where; but wisely to consider the customs of the place, the circumstances of time and the constitution of believers; for he said things were not to be valued for the sake of the place, but the places for the good things in them:—a wise council had the

* As to observation on Easter, we submit, though not found in our present authorities, that considering the Saxons had a Goddess they called *EASTER*, whose festival occurred about the time of the Christian feast of Easter; and Augustine coming immediately from the Anglo Saxons, the Britons to whom every thing connected with that treacherous people was an abomination, might refuse on that ground to conform to his proposition.

ambassador been more discrete:—but the genius of Augustine appears to have inclined him more to a *military* than a *monastic* life. It should seem from what followed, that he was not, indeed influenced by the pure spirit of the religion he professed, but that revenge, malice and bloodshed were, to his disgrace, as a minister of Christ, apparent in his character; when we are told that he prevailed so much against the British clergy, that he deprived the archbishop of CAERLEON, and other British bishops of their provinces, which their predecessors had enjoyed from the time of *Lucius* about four hundred years before, without a charge of crime, or ecclesiastical sentence from a synod; and prevailed upon *Ædelfrid* king of the Northumbrians, and other Saxon princes, to raise an army against the innocent British christians; and this warlike force, slew many in a great battle, besides one thousand two hundred unarmed priests, who stood apart on a place of advantage, where they had come to pray for the success of their arms, against the oppressive invaders of their liberties, and the destroyer of their rights.—However the immediate retributive justice of Heaven, quickly vindicated itself upon the instrument of oppression of those people, by raising up three illustrious British princes, who intercepted the return of *Ædelfrid* with

that of his army, whom they completely discomfited, wounded the king, killed ten thousand and sixty of his forces and pursued the wounded king to great extremity.

From what has appeared,—it is manifest,—we submit,—that the British church at that time acknowledged no subjection to any foreign authority; neither had it communion with the Roman church; but it was subject from the days of *Eletherius* to a metropolitan of its own, the archbishop of *Caerleon*, who acknowledged no superior in ecclesiastical matters but God alone, which institution had been received from the Eastern and Asiatic churches.

However, to return to a former consideration, *the destruction of Cassino*, which happened but a few years before: the monks were sent to England, this event communicated to the ecclesiastical establishments of this country, a novel feature: and since his monastery appears to have been then the only one in Italy; it should seem probable, that the monks, its inhabitants, were desirous to be placed in a land of greater security and safety; and also in a country where they might expect a more plentiful harvest. Now that both these objects appeared to their supe-

rions, were probable to be accomplished here ; the first was to be obtained from the insular situation of the country ; whilst the second, was to be achieved from the easy success of Augustine, and the ready reception which the powerful Saxons had given to the doctrines of the Roman church. They had no sooner obtained a footing here, than they immediately blended their monkish institutions with episcopacy. This inference is made from the fact of Augustine himself, whenever, he procured an episcopal see to be erected ; contiguous to which, was founded a monastery, where the monks were considered as a standing council, to aid and assist the bishops in the discharge of their duties, to provide teachers, and a succession of them for instructing the villages and country. And it had not yet happened that monasteries were founded, without a bishop, and independent of his authority : and in a manner under the government of an abbot, to set up a separate and distinct interest and to be labouring in the service of a different master. All which we find actually came to pass in succeeding ages, when the monkish bodies became very numerous, rich, and powerful, and always took part with the pope, as their lawful, and only sovereign : and when the clergy and ministering priesthood though numerous, were borne down by the

monks, and a constant enmity and oppression prevailed between the regular and secular clergy.*

That the first bishops were Romans their very names inform us, and that wherever Augustine appointed a bishop;—he there established a monastery; as the history of every cathedral will evince. Or if the metropolitan did not establish a monastery together with a bishoprick, it appears the new bishop founded one or more monasteries very soon after their appointment.

When the time came that Offa had power, there had been about twenty great monasteries founded, and the same number of episcopal sees established; some of the former, unconnected with any see; and some of the latter not conjoined or united with the former, the general design of both, being to civilize and instruct mankind, and to teach the doctrines of divine truth, and salvation to the species, but in ways which differed much in future ages, and laid the foundation of great enmity between those bodies and their respective superiors. At this period then, it is probable, when the warlike Offa had nearly finished

* Ecclesiastical History informs us this was the case, in the ninth and tenth centuries.

his active and martial life, when the mind had more leisure for reflection, the intrusion of a compunctious conscience, continually visiting him; for although he might have had no hand in the plotting or perpetration of Ethelbert's murder: yet as he partook of its produce by appropriating his dominions to his own use, he might feel as a participator in the crime, and be desirous to be reconciled to an offended Providence. In these moments, we are not left to doubt because history informs us he consulted his spiritual advisers, the great ecclesiastics Humbert, archbishop of Litchfield, and Unwona, bishop of Leicester, who would not fail to admonish him of repentance, and point out the way by which he was to find that peace he desired.

In that age, it has been said, "the Doctrine of the church was contrary to what would now be preached to a dying monarch," although this expression seems to us uncertain and inexplicable, for considering the man was dead, what recompense could he receive? and as he had, perhaps left no kin behind, to whom restitution could be made: if therefore, there was no one to receive the contrite sovereign's offering; we could ask, in what manner so acceptable to every principle of divine or human justice, could his peni-

tence be manifested with every desire to be extremely serviceable to the then present and prospective posterity? As to raise and endow a school for the exercise of religion,—an hospital for the reception of the sick, infirm, and the aged—an almonry where the poor were cherished, their wants relieved, and an inn where the way-worn traveller found repose and refreshment!—all these were united in a monastic establishment. So we must view it, and are compelled to acknowledge charitable foundations of this description, embrace the most extensive views of benevolence. It will be assuredly confessed, that Benevolence when extensively directed, approximates nearest to the Divine Nature. Offa's foundation is therefore justifiable, as it was every way worthy of a great and good mind, and in magnificence could be scarce exceeded by any, however noble. Still the author on whom we comment, considers Offa's charity to be directed to his own selfish and individual good only. We are sorry to differ from him, considering his profession; but we humbly conceive, that every act of which a human creature is capable in this life, if not directed to the honor and glory of the Deity exclusively, or the benefit of his creatures, is to be reduced to some *carnal* motive or other. Such is the inclination of our almost general nature, and since all human efforts

are directed to the attainment of present or future happiness, they come under our author's* general point of present view—but we submit, that provided a minister of Christ, can throw such stumbling blocks in our way, he fairly exposes himself to animadversion:—and to conclude our observation upon this point, we really cannot understand what other way was left open to the repentant king, to obtain a reconciliation with an offended God, except it were by doing an act, meant to benefit his then present as well as future posterity, by taking care of their religious and hospitable interests, this act, we are taught to believe, by a gospel precept, which cannot be doubted, proclaims that “*It is more blessed to give, than receive.*”—To follow our author, ‘this was an institution in which the dying man was interested, and from which he hoped, for some private benefit:—that when his own prayers should have ceased, the devotion of others might be hired and employed on his behalf: a doctrine—this too flattering to the dying man, to be overlooked or neglected; and too gainful to the monk to be omitted.’ We cannot but think this point is too sarcastically handled, considering the general belief of the period,—allowing for this mode of faith, we see no objection that can be rationally urged a-

* Newcome.

Offa seems to have been much perplexed about the place, as well as the patron, but in this uncertainty he was relieved* by a kind of miraculous intelligence; for being then at Winslow, in deep meditation on the subject, he prayed with great earnestness to God, that, as he had often delivered him from the dangers and assaults of his enemies, from the traps and snares of his wife, so he would vouchsafe to grant him further light and information, to enable him to complete his vow of founding a monastery, concluding, with an earnest address to his relations and brethren, 'that they would unanimously and devoutly beseech God to enable him to bring his intent to effect.' The history says that all present retired into the chapel to pray, among whom were Humbert and Unwona, who are called special counsellors to the king; and that the congregation having prayed longer than ordinary with the same wishes as the king had expressed, a sudden light from Heaven filled the place with uncommon splendour. This was considered as a token of God's favor; and the king determined to grant the royal manor of Winslow where the miracle happened to endow his new foundation.

Afterwards when he was in Bath, in the rest and

* M. Paris.

silence of night, he was accosted by an angel, who admonished him to raise out of the earth the body of the first British martyr, *Alban*, and put his remains in a shrine, with more suitable ornament. This event, now reckoned most propitious, is communicated to *Humbert* then at *Litchfield*, who taking unto him *Unwona*, bishop of *Leicester*, and *Ceolwolph*, bishop of *Lindsey*, his suffragans, proceeds immediately with a great crowd of followers of both sexes and of all ages to meet the king, on a certain day by him appointed at *Verulam*. The king journeying towards this city there appeared a light shining over the place and resembling a large torch, that the same was seen by all present in *Verulam*, and interpreted as a most favorable omen. Fasting and prayer were observed by the prelates, priests and people, beseeching the martyr himself to assist in the discovery. For, from length of time and continual wars, the memory of *Alban* had been nearly lost : except to some few of the most ancient inhabitants, since *Germanus* bishop of *Auxerre* preached here against the *Pelagian* heresy 340 years before that period.

In the overthrow committed by the Pagan Saxons upon this spot, the church which *Bede* had seen and commended for its workmanship, with other religious

structures had been levelled, the prelates and ministers destroyed, and in brief, the country reduced to a mere desert. Previous to the ingress of the Saxons, the church built by Germanus to Alban, had been in good repute, not only for the miracles shewn, but for the piety of him whose memory its foundation commemorated: being by the previously described means discovered to the invincible king, by an angel, the exact place of sepulchre before unknown, was then ascertained. However when the search with prayer, fasting and alms was made, this miraculous light from Heaven, being vouchsafed to assist the discovery, the ground was opened where it pointed, and in the presence of Offa, the body of Alban found in the coffin, with the relics as left by Germanus 344 years before, which were conveyed to a little chapel without the walls of Verulam, formerly built near where he had suffered; which chapel being small, had escaped devastation. Upon this the king placed a circle of gold round the bare skull of the deceased, with this inscription, *Hoc est caput Jandi Albani protomartyris Angliæ*; caused the chapel and repository to be enriched with plates of gold and silver; and to be decorated with pictures, tapestry, and other ornaments, until a more noble edifice could be erected. This transaction happened 507

years after the suffering of Alban, 344 after the invasion of the Saxons, and on the 1st day of August, in the 36th year of Offa's reign, that is 791 from Christ.

Although this church had been demolished near 300 years before, it should seem probable, the fame of Alban had not totally perished ; since this chapel, afterwards called St. German's chapel, would tend in some degree to preserve the remembrance of him. Since the name of his master and instructor, Amphibalus, had been held in such veneration and esteem, that the founders of the episcopal and monastic church at Winchester, *i. e.* *Constans* the bishop, and *Deodatus* the abbot, had dedicated the same to the honor and in memory of Amphibalus in 309 : yet, since, in the succeeding ages, the christian church has endured some devastation and several lamentable changes, so we may reasonably infer, that if we except the dedication of a church by *Paulinus* at Cambodunum in Yorkshire to Alban the martyr, that his memory existed in the time of Offa only, in report, and the tradition of the aged.

In that age of simple credulity, when the martyr's body was discovered, it should seem * that the cir-

* From the Chronicle of M. Paris.

cumstance of discovery and removal of the body was accompanied with numerous miracles. The historian speaks as though he thought miracles were every day occurrences, and not as the extraordinary operations of the Almighty wrought on great occasions, and for important purposes. His faith might warrant such belief, therefore he thought it was not extraordinary.

The king had thought proper to call his council together for the benefit of their advice in this great concern; after mature deliberation, it was determined that the king should in person go to Rome, to solicit leave of the Pope, and procure the desired privileges to his foundation. The king proceeded, and went in full intention to make his endowment, as far transcend all other monasteries as St. Alban had surpassed all other martyrs. The pope with commendations of the king's zeal and piety grants all his requests. Whilst Offa in return, gave the pope, for the use of the english school at Rome a fee called *Peter pence*, or *Rome scot*, previously mentioned, as first granted by *Ina*, and well known in English history, through the Mercian dominions. Offa, having now made full confession to his holiness of all his crimes, received additional absolution, and departed with a devout benediction.

SECTION 2nd.

*Continuation of History of the Abbey, noticing progressive Improvements,
Memoirs of Abbots chronologically arranged.*

WILLEGOD, first Abbot.

The king, upon his return, again convened a great council or parliament at Verulam; and proceeded to accomplish his design: resolving to bestow on Alban very ample possessions; considering it as a work intended for alms and hospitality, that the local situation of the foundation would render such desirable, it being on the great road called *Walling Street*, it would consequently be resorted to by many passengers in their progress between London, the North and Ireland: and deeming it an act of piety to relieve and accommodate all travellers. Having made a selection of persons from other religious houses, especially from *Bec*, in Normandy, proper for monks, he placed over them, as abbot and superior, one *Willegod*; a man who had witnessed the miraculous flame on finding the body of the martyr; who had devoted himself to a religious life, was of a noble family, and related to the king; a proper place being chosen, *i. e.* (where the body of the martyr was found) the king began the building

with great solemnity, laying with his own hands the first stone, at the same time, devoutly making this address :—" *To thee O Jesus! and to thee O Martyr Alban! and to thee O Willegod!—with maledictions on all who should disturb it, and eternal blessings on those who should be its benefactors.*" He proceeded in his work, furnishing Willegod with money, and making him the director and ruler; yet, it is added, he continued to live here the rest of his life, and conducted the building at his own expense, except that he obtained leave to use the Peter pence collected in the district now known at the county of Hertford, performing himself, the part of surveyor or guardian of this noble fabric.

The materials from whence this pile was originally founded, as well as those, wherewith it has been subsequently improved, were all, or at least the most material part, extracted from the ruins of ancient Verulam, which being chiefly composed of red tiles, of the following dimensions, $15\frac{6}{7}$ in. long, $11\frac{5}{8}$ in. broad, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick, was of well-burnt materials: this tile was procured in great abundance from the ruins of ancient Verulam, of which the present church, even to the columns which support the roof, and it is presumed the monastery

was chiefly built, except where an angle occurs in the building, with the spandrills of the arches and their ornamented bases, and wherever it was necessary to use the plane for a moulding, the moulding of the basis, the battlements, their mouldings, &c. occur—the whole ancient edifice was formed of this tile. The stone is from Tottenhoe, which easily yields to a tool. The diversity of materials, and with here and there a few yards of stone casing, proves a great relief to that sameness which would probably ensue, had the fabric consisted of one material only.

When the illustrious Offa had nearly completed all the offices and buildings, which within the 4th year he had effected; and having placed therein about 100 monks of the regular order, he retired to his palace at Offley, and there closed the days of his active pilgrimage. His body was afterwards conveyed to Bedford, and deposited in a royal manner in some chapel without the town, on the banks of the Ouse. But so early as the time of M. Paris, there remained neither monument, sepulchre, or even chapel; and tradition has it, that the violence of the flood had washed all away. In what light soever the character of this great man is seen, whether his vices were counterbalanced by his virtues,

or whatever was the moral good which his existence conferred upon society, we have no room to enquire : suffice it to observe—that in our days, obloquy would await those who are found so careless of the memory of their friends, relatives, and benefactors, as were the descendants of this potent prince.

The endowment made by Offa was of his manor of Winslow, about 20 miles from St. Albans, and as many miles in circumference, as the records in the church will testify: this estate alone was said to have been the only one exempt from the tax of Peter pence, within the Mercian dominions.

At the death of Offa, which happened in 794, *Willegod* was in complete possession of his new government and dignity, and had established the rules of his house. The monks, who had been elected from other establishments and were under the vow and obligation of St. Benedict's order; introduced to this country by St. Augustine, which had been established by Benedict himself at Cassinam.—The vow of which order was this: 'To live in the constant observance of the most rigid charity, to have no possessions of their own, and to pay obedience to the superior or abbot.' Their dress was a long

black tunic, or close gown reaching to their heels, loose and ungirded, beneath they wore a white close waistcoat of woollen, and a hair shirt;—for a covering of the head, which was shaved to the extremity of the crown, leaving only a circle of hair, there was a cowl hanging back on the shoulders; the feet and legs were covered with a boot. In their diet they were compelled to abstain from all flesh, except when they were attacked by sickness.

Willegod ruled this abbey for no longer than two months after Offa's death. For though Egfrid his son had succeeded Offa, and had given in the first year of his reign no less than five small manors to the abbey; yet he refused the request of Willegod and the monks, to have his father interred in this place of royal foundation; which disappointment, and the apparent ingratitude in the young king, caused such an affliction in Willegod, as to hasten his death.

The *second* Abbot, EADRIC, was chosen from the body of the monks, as charged in the rules given by the founder; which Eadric was related to the royal family. Concerning him, historians and chroniclers are silent.

The *third* Abbot was **VULSIG** or *Ulsin*, also a relative of the royal family of Offa: but now **ALFRED** was sole monarch of all England--this abbot departed from the strict sobriety of his rank, and though chosen out of the society, soon became elevated with worldly pride, he changed not only the form and shape, but the colour of his garments; used vestments of silk, and walked with a long train. Instead of serious study at home, he pursued the sports of the field; grew dainty in his meat and drink, and courted the favour of the great and powerful, more than the silent favours of God. Another of his enormities was to invite crowds of noble ladies to his table; whereby he injured not only his own fame, but scandalized the sobriety of his house. He alienated and wasted the substance of his treasury, and disposed of the choice utensils which Offa had left them, the rich cloaks, or palls, with valuable collars and chains. He united his female relations in marriage to the nobles and great men, enriching them at the expense of the Abbey. *Matthew Paris* says, this carnal abbot satiated with the fat of the public wealth, excited not only the vengeance of God, but the whole convent, and having died in a fit of intemperate drinking, the grave men of the abbey rose in arms against those who had acquired their riches, and ob-

tained a restitution of the greater part, leaving indigence and misery to the late possessors.

The *fourth* Abbot was VULNOTH, he strove for three years with diligence to rectify those abuses which his predecessors had occasioned, but at length exceeded the last abbot in enormity during his sober interval, at his commencement, he had reproved certain nuns, almost approaching to secular, and who lived in Vulsig's time too near the church, these he had removed further and fixed in one dwelling, settled bounds to their walks, limiting the hours and place of their meals, their devotions and sleep; also of their silence, which were intended for private prayer. Their business was to collect alms, and attend the early morning prayer in the great church. For the better preservation of their health, they were ordered abstinence from all diet of flesh. Within the time previously mentioned, these good beginnings of reform, were polluted with a most shameful end, for he also altered the original shape and colour of the monkish frock and cowl, quitted the monastic habit, kept dogs, and birds for hunting, and put on the manners and the dress of a hunter. By this licentious course, he wasted the treasures of the church and disgraced the fame of religion.

Vulnoth having governed the church eleven years was struck with a palsy; and he turning this temporal punishment to a spiritual correction, gave proofs of a sincere repentance. Seeming to himself, as chastised by the scourge of Heaven, changed his life to so great a degree of sanctity, to reform others by his example, and to finish his life in felicity.

During this abbacy, in the reign of Ethelred *anno* 930, the Danes were committing great excesses all over England; a party of them, hearing the fame of Alban, the first martyr of Britain, they came to the abbey, broke open the tomb, seized his bones and carried some of them off into their own country, which they deposited in a costly shrine, built for the purpose, in a house of the black monks; hoping they would obtain the same veneration in Denmark which had been paid them in Britain.

The *fifth* Abbot was *ÆDFRID*, descended from Saxon nobility, elegant in manners, decent and person; but in his conduct and actions extremely vain and despicable. On his election from prior of the abbey to the rank of abbot, he threw aside all severity of his past behaviour, and

ed to the cloister, and wasted his life in useless care and idle festivity. Attentive to the business of the treasury, he seldom appeared in the cloister, and never condescended to shew himself in the choir. In defence of old possessions of the church, he was warm and strenuous; but in obtaining new acquisitions very pusillanimous; he was noted only for obtaining a cup much admired for its workmanship and matter, which was dedicated to St. Alban for holding the wafer, which when consecrated, was called the Lord's body.

In this abbacy, and in the reign of Edmund the good, Ulpho the prior, with permission of the abbot, but without his assistance, built a chapel in honor of St. Germanus, whose sanctity has been mentioned, with regard to St. Alban; which Germanus had, after his honor to the martyr, resided, it is understood, at St. Albans, near to the pool, where his buildings then lay in utter ruin, and there the prior built his chapel, and a residence for himself, where he dwelt on the produce of a small garden; subsequent to the death of Ulpho, Ædfrid the abbot laid down his dignity, retired to this spot and pursued the same course the prior had pointed out.—*Stukeley* gave a view of their ruins. It is 61 years since they have been finally destroyed.

The most friendly and extensively benevolent man who had yet appeared, as an abbot, was the *sixth* Abbot, ULSINUS, who being of a pious and orderly life, became conspicuous in all spiritual and temporal concerns. By this time something of a village was gathered about the new church and abbey, this abbot invited and encouraged the inhabitants of the adjacent parts to build and settle there. For which purpose he gave them materials and money, and laid out a place for, and established a market. He also constructed a church at each entrance of this future town. Dedicated that on the north to St. Peter, that on the south to St. Stephen, and another on the west to St. Michael: at the confluence of the roads, and not intended so much for ornament, as for the utility of the village and the edification of the people.*

He was succeeded by ÆLFRIC, or ALFRIC, the first of that name, who was the *seventh* Abbot. This abbot purchased at the price of the before mentioned cup provided by Ædfrid, from the king,† the great fish pool, for it was a fishery belonging to the king, whose palace was at the place now known as Kingsbury: this pool by reason of its proximity to the abbey

* This occurred in the reign of Edred, A. D. 948.

† Probably Edgar.

and from the intolerant pride of the royal servants, had been hurtful and troublesome to this religious body. Ælfric, to prevent these inconveniencies, cut a passage through the head which had confined the waters, drained them off, preserving only a small part for the benefit of the abbey. Ælfric was a man of great learning, the author of a Saxon grammar, many epistles and sermon books of his are extant in the libraries of Worcester, Gloucester, and Exeter cathedrals, in the Latin and Saxon languages. Ælfric had been educated in the schools of Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester: the same, who with Dunstan archbishop of Canterbury, and Oswald bishop of Worcester expelled all married priests and introduced monks in their room. Ælfric was also abbot of Malmsbury, in Edgar's time:—but what is most remarkable, that in his epistles and also in a sermon for Easter Day, the same doctrine appears concerning the eucharist which appeared at the Reformation, under Elizabeth and Edward, against bodily presence and transubstantiation.

Ælfric, or as usually written Elfric, is, as reputed, the first translator of the Bible into Saxon, or at least many books of it; as shewn by his tracts.

EALDRED, the *eighth* Abbot succeeded **Elfric**, and as Ealdred was wholly intent, in searching the remains of the ancient city Verulam, in digging out old foundations, arches, and levelling uneven places with a view to clear away thieves and robbers living there in concealment; in furtherance of his designs, he was careful to preserve the materials he found for building; having determined to pull down the then great church, and in due time to build it quite new. His workmen in making excavations were said to find many things, which relation, will find a place in our second part.

The next in succession was the *ninth* Abbot **EADMER**, reported to have been eminent for piety, gentleness, and learning. He, also, was found employed in furthering the views of his predecessor with regard to rebuilding. His workmen in digging likewise made several singular discoveries.*

LEOFRIC was the *tenth* Abbot, son of the earl of Kent, of great personal beauty, but more eminent for faith and morals. His merits and fame were so great that the monks of Canterbury elected him to be archbishop, but he, at first declined it in favour of his

* Which will be stated in the second part.

brother Ælfric, (whom he had persuaded to write the short history of St. Alban,) whom he alledged to be more worthy of it; but the Canterbury clergy persisting, he at length was prevailed on to accept that dignity. Whilst he was abbot of St. Albans, the land was visited by a severe famine, and during the exigence of this calamity, for the alleviation of existing distress, he spent all the treasure which had been collected for the intended building, and to raise more money for the charitable purpose, he sold the materials which had been gathered, consisting of columns, pillars, and stone pavements, from the old city; he likewise disposed of all the gold and silver vessels for sacred uses, as well as those meant for his own service; reserving only from the former, all such jewels and precious stones for which he could find no purchasers, on account of their great value. In excuse for this,—which the disaffected of the cloister called waste, he alledged that “*The faithful in Christ, especially if they were poor, constituted the church and temple of God; and were indeed that real and true church which it was his duty to build up and preserve. And it was the best instance of pure and undefiled religion, to visit the fatherless and the widows in affliction.*” Although this liberality produced dissensions in his monastery, yet they were composed

and moderated not by the entreaties or the persuasions of this charitable man, so much as, from their fear of the civil powers; his relations bearing high rank in the state. His notions of high birth, were such,—that he would not admit to the profession of a monk, any but such, who were of famous descent, or who had signalized themselves by their own merit. On no account would he admit the ignoble or illegitimate.

He was succeeded in the abbacy by his own brother ÆLFRIC, the second of that name, who was the *eleventh* Abbot, and who possessed the same generosity and the like accomplishments both of body and mind; and was equally skilled in sacred learning as was his brother. When he entered on his office of abbot, a brother of the house named Leofstan, paid him a compliment in Latin rhyme. Ælfric was originally chanter of the abbey, during which, he composed and set to music a legendry life of Saint Alban. Ælfric, being of high birth and good education, was advanced whilst a scholar to be chancellor to king Ethelred: when in this high station he purchased from the king,* certain lands called Kingsbury; containing

* When abbot, obtained a confirmation of the Deed from Ethelred.

the royal mansion, stews, warrens and woods belonging to the same. Which mansion, because it had often given offence and trouble to the monastery, Ælfric caused to be demolished, and levelled with the ground; except one small tower nearer to the monastery, which the king * at that time would not permit to be thrown down; in order that some footsteps of royalty might appear, and which endures, (says *M. Paris*) to this day, and bears his name. And it has been thought to be the same old tower which at this time stands by the side of the market, and is now used as a clock house.

This abbot lived through the reigns of Canute, Harold, and Hardicanute; and when king Edward, afterwards called the Confessor, succeeded in 1041. In this reign the Danes renewed their invasions, making dreadful havoc in many parts where they marched or pleased to settle themselves. Ælfric, therefore, fearing their robberies, knowing their predatory disposition, caused the most valuable effects of the monastery, and what was more esteemed than other goods, the bones which remained of St. Alban, and the shrine enclosing the same, to be concealed in a secret wall, viz. close under the altar of St.

* Canute.

Nicholas; with the privity of some few of the brothers only. But he sent an open message to the abbot and monks of Ely, requesting that as their place was well secured by waters and marshes from the incursions of those robbers, they would be pleased to receive into their convent of Ely, the relics of St. Alban, and keep them safe until the same should be demanded, when peace and quiet should be established. The monks of Ely consented, and Ælfric sent them the remains or relics of some ordinary monk, inclosed in some very rich chest. He sent also, many ornaments of his church; and to give it a better appearance of truth, he added a very rough shagged old coat, with an insinuation and caution, that this was the very coat usually worn by Amphibalus, master of St. Alban.* The Danes, however, were disappointed in their projected invasion, from the loss of their king, who going on board, fell into the sea, and was drowned: in less than a year the alarm was over, and England breathed freely, and at liberty. The Albanians then demanded the relics, the Elycians refused, and sending back a saucy answer, determined to keep them. The true owners pleaded the sanctity of the engagement, they threatened to inform, not only the king,

* See further in the life of *Symond*, the 19th abbot.

but the pope, also of their breach of faith, and of religion. The Elycians then began to entertain a fear; and disagreeing, a schism happened among them. The major part, however, thought the bones of Alban to be valuable; and as much so to them, as to their old masters, and resolved to keep them. Yet to save appearances, they contrived to open the bottom of the chest, drew out the bones it contained, and placed others of an ordinary sort in their room; and thus sent back the chest with its sacred contents. The Albanians deposited the same in a wooden chest which was over the altar of St. Oswin, who was in 644 a pious king of the Northumbrians, and basely murdered; but as his piety had raised churches, chapels, oratories and various altars to his memory, in the north; whence, his fame travelled as far as Verulam; over this altar were these relics placed, and in the same chest which had been said to have contained the original remains of the martyr, until they had been inhumed.

Elfric now drew the authentic relics out of the wall, and placed them with the shrine, in the midst of the church:—Edward the Confessor being informed of this fraud committed by the monks of Ely, expressed great anger, but left them in possession of their im-

aginary relics. His death is thought to have prevented their chastisement.

Elfric was succeeded by LEOFSTAN, the *twelfth* abbot, who had composed the distich, previously mentioned, to have been presented to the last abbot, on his elevation. The present abbot had been a familiar friend with *Edward* the king; confessor and counsellor to him, and his queen *Editka*, who was daughter of Earl Goodwin. The surname of this abbot, was *Plumstan*: his chief attention, as far as related to temporal concerns, had the safety and convenience of the public for its object; hence, we find his views directed to measures of good police, at that time particularly necessary; because the public ways, and particularly the great Watling-Street road, as well as a road called the Royal way, both of these roads, and indeed all others were at that period rendered particularly dangerous to travellers, from the country being covered with woods through which the roads in this district passed, affording shelter to beasts of prey, of which, there were numbers, consisting of wolves, boars, stags, and wild bulls; also to inhuman men—robbers, and murderers, more savage and more fell than those beasts. This consideration induced Leofstan, from the humanity

of his nature, to grant the manor of Flamstead to a very valiant knight, named *Thurnot* * and to his two fellow soldiers; for which Thurnot gave privately to the abbot five ounces of gold, a very beautiful palfrey nag, for his own riding, with a very choice greyhound; this manor was granted to Thurnot, on condition, that he should guard and defend by himself and retinue, all the highways called Watling-Street, the Royal way, and all the western parts of the Chiltern; with this conditional stipulation, that he should be answerable for any losses which might happen therein by his neglect. And in case any general wars should arise in the kingdom, that Thurnot and his train should strenuously guard and protect the church of St. Alban.

These conditions were punctually complied with, by Thurnot, and his companions, until the time of William the Conqueror; when that manor was taken from them, because they disdained being subject to the Normans; and frequent skirmishes happened between these defenders and the invaders,—houses were burnt and many slain on both sides: when at

* *Chauncey* says, *Leofstan*, abbot of St. Albans, gave this village, i. e. *Flamstead*, unto three Knights, *Thurnot*, *Waldese*, and *Turman*, to defend and secure the county against thieves in the time of King Edward the Confessor. p. 564.

length the Normans gaining strength and their conquest established, the said manor was given to Roger de Thoni, who wished to deprive the monastery of their rights; but who fulfilled with great diligence the above service and engagement.—This abbot conferred some ornaments on his church, and left his monastery very affluent and abundant. But as a great revolution was soon to be expected, our authority adds, it is proper to look back and shew what acquisitions the monks possessed; we wish, we could, under all circumstances, follow him, and shew from whose benevolent and pious endowments the same had arisen; as we are circumstanced, the following brief memoir may suffice.

Beside the palace, buildings, land and manor of Winslow, the original gift of the founder, his son Egfrid in the first year of his reign 795, conferred on the abbey five manors, in a place called *Pynerfeld*; that is the manor so called, and situate in Rickmansworth, and other manors in the same parish. In the reign of Edmund Ironside, and Edward the Confessor, Elfric the abbot, purchased of the crown for five marks, an estate called Oxange and Adulfinton: and for fifty pounds, he bought Norton, Upton, and Becees Wortham, in perpetual

right and inheritance. At what time they became possessed of Flamstead, we have not ascertained ; but the then present abbot Leofstan, by means of his connection and interest at court with the king and queen, obtained Studham, Redbourn, Langley, Greenbury, and Thaunton. The first was probably by grant or legacy from one Oswulph and his wife Adilitha, and the other four were from Ezelwin and his wife Wineflæd, and probably by legacy, because they were accompanied with other rents, gifts, and ornaments.

At the time when the great survey was made and entered in the book called *Domesdie*, which book, contains a survey, not of all the lands in the kingdom, but only such lands which were granted by the Conqueror to, and held by his Norman chiefs; to enable him to establish *Knights fees* in all English counties; except Durham, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, for the purpose of guarding his new acquisition.* The possessions of the abbey in this county, are there recorded, and from thence the following short extracts are made.

* See *Ingulphus*.

THE LAND OF ST. ALBAN, IN THE HUNDRED OF
ALBANESTON.

In Henamested (Hempsted) were 20 hides rated, two mills 20s. each,—pasture, common for cattle, wood for 1400 hogs; whole value £22. 10s. In the time of Edward the Confessor £25. This manor lies in the lordship near the said church of St. Alban.

The abbot holds in Scenlai, (Shenley) and is taxed for 6 hides, pasture, or common for cattle; and wood for 400 hogs, value in the whole £12. In the time of Edward £6. Manor in the same lordship.

—Walden, assessed for 10 hides. The land is 14 carucates; in domain, 3 hides, 2 mills of 15s. rent, meadow half a carucate, pasture for cattle; a grove or wood for hedges and for houses, the value £18. 10s. In the time of Edward £20. 10.

—Sandridge for 10 hides. The land 13 carucates; in domain, 3 hides, 1 mill of 10s. rent, pasture for cattle, a wood for 300 hogs; value £18.

The town of St. Alban is assessed 10 hides. The

land is 16 carucates; in domain, 8 hides. Here are 46 householders. From the toll and other rents £11. 13s. is raised; 3 mills of 40s. rent: value £20. a year; a wood for 1000 hogs. In this town are 12 cottagers, one inclosure or park for beasts of the forest, and one fish pool. The said householders possess half an hide of land.

IN BRODEWATER HUNDRED.

Codicote and Oxewiche. These two manors were separate and distinct in the time of Edward; but now make one, and contain 8 hides; with pasture for cattle, and a wood for 200 hogs: value £6. In the time of Edward £12. a year. Here did Alwin hold of the abbot 13 hides, not separable from the church. The abbot holds Norton, for four hides, two mills of 16s. rent, pasture and meadow half a carucate; value £17.

In Escepehale, (Shephall) 3 hides, pasture; wood for 10 hogs, value £4. a year.

IN DANAIS HUNDRED. (DACORUM.)

In Langley the abbot holds 5 hides, 2 mills of 20s. pasture, and wood for 300 hogs.

In Redborne seven hides and one virgate, two mills of 26s. value, pasture, and wood for 300 hogs; value £3. In Edward's time £4.

In Winrige, Goisfric de Bech held one hide and a half of the abbot; pasture, and wood for 300 hogs, worth 40s. and in Edward's time 50s.

In Tilebersth the same Goisfric held of the abbot half a hide; value 6s.

In Redborne one Amelger held of the abbot three virgates and a half, with wood for 200 hogs; worth 30s. per annum.

The abbot holds in Richemareworde 5 hides, the land is 20 carucates, one mill of 5s. pasture for cattle, and wood for 1200 hogs; value £20. 10s. but when received £12.

The abbot holds the manor of Caisson for twenty hides; of these the abbot possesses nineteen. The land is twenty-three carucates, four mills of 26s. 8d. rent; meadow, twenty-two carucates, pasture and wood for 1000 hogs: value £28. and in the time of Edward £30.

In Eldeham, (Aldenham) Goisfric holds of the abbot 1 hide, with wood for 100 hogs, now worth 10s. and in the time of Edward 20s.

IN ODESIE HUNDRD.

The abbot holds Newham, for 3 hides and 3 virgates. The land is 8 carucates, value £9. and in Edward's time £10.

IN THE HALF HUNDRED OF HIZ.

In Hegæstanestone, (Hexton) the abbot holds 8 hides and 3 virgates, 2 mills of 7s. 4d. rent; meadow half a carucate, and pasture, value £17.

In Bennington the abbot holds one hide. The land is 2 carucates; pasture, and a grove for hedge-wood, value 50s.

Beside the above possession in *Domesdie* book, the abbey held the following estates: Ethelgine, gave by will, Gatesden, and 30 oxen. Walph, gave Estun, or Easton, and Oxawic or Oxeys. King Ethelred, in the time of Leofric the abbot, had given six houses in Flamstead and Verulam. Egfrid the

son of Offa had given beside Pynefeld, land in Turville, Bucks. (*terram decum manerium.*)

But after all, the income of this establishment was very slender when compared with its necessary expenditure :—considering that they had at all times above 100 persons to feed, clothe, and provide with lodging daily ; and this independent of the charge of travellers and visitors ; also the poor who were relieved at their gates. These things considered, reflection must convince us of its poverty.

Leofstan died, and FREDERIC the *thirteenth* Abbot, was elected to succeed him before the death of Edward, and he saw the short and bloody reign of Harold, sanguinary, because of the contest between the lawful possessors and the invaders of their rights.

The change effected by the Norman conquest was not only dispossessing of persons, and their expulsion from their houses and property ; but it tended to a complete revolution in morals, policy, and the entire national character of the people. For the manners of the Saxons, though by nature warlike and resisting aggression, yet in the long period of national peace, under good, humane, and religious princes, they had

acquired so complete a domesticatory species of character, that indicated practical utility with sincerity of manners; and that they were pious also, we have seen; whilst their invaders, were marked by that character, which a long residence in camps never fails to generate; arrogant, presuming, wanton, jesting, and inclined to ridicule every thing serious and sterling. So we perceive were the tempers of the two people so diametrically opposed, whom the fate of war had brought together.—For the conqueror, we are told, not only employed the utmost derision on the nobles and gentry; but compelled them and other orders of Saxon population, to adopt according to their ideas, a more polished mode of dress and civility; which was at first considered by the injured Saxons as a shocking insult, and so wanton a mark of foreign dominion, that many of them quitted their houses and sought shelter in woods, where with their families they had constructed temporary conveniencies, and endeavoured to subsist. And it grew to be customary with this unfortunate race, that whether remaining at home, or seeking shelter in woods, to barricade their doors every night, and at the same time invoke the protection of the Almighty in prayer, as uncertain whether they might ever see the next return of light. But in all such cases, more was felt than met

the eye,—we may be conscious from what we now see of the endeavour of feeble description to record their sufferings.—Personal insult, was not all, the nation suffered; for the conquerors introduced also, numberless vices and immoralities unknown to the Saxons. They practised rapine and perjury, from being supported in it by their superiors, and they indulged themselves in extreme uncleanness and debauchery in late hours, in gaming, and in uttering the most dreadful imprecations with impunity; vices as shocking from their novelty, as from their atrocious nature.

The abbot (Frederic) perceiving the road to London, which was along the Watling Street to be much infested with thieves and robbers, who sheltered themselves in the thick woods adjoining, demised the manor of Aldenham to the abbot of Westminster for a term of 20 years, on condition that he engaged to defend and guard the road, and protect all travellers, likewise to pay the rent of 100s. and 4 fat oxen. This abbot was Theobald, who in right of that abbey, had in possession the adjacent manor of Tiburst and Kendals. But being a familiar friend of the conqueror, and hence having good interest in court, he neglected not only to fulfil his engagement, but

thirsted after more; accordingly, desired to possess a fine wood or grove, not far distant from Aldenham, called for its beauty and pleasantness Prudeitti, a name most probably derived from the British word **Pruddaw**. signifying mournful, pensive, decent, comely, Theobald alleging that the same was within the manor and ought to be considered as part thereof: at the end of the 20 years he refused to give up the manor, pretending losses and injuries from being denied his claim to the wood; and being supported by his Norman friends, kept possession, and gave all possible trouble and vexation to the abbot and monks of St. Alban.

Upon William's invasion, this abbot had the trees cut down to impede the conqueror's way near Berk-hampstead, upon William asking who had done it? he boldly answered, that he had done no more than his duty, and if all the ecclesiastics in the kingdom had performed theirs in like manner, he would not have advanced so far.

Frederic died about ten years after his election, which was A. D. 1066, but he had begun to rule the abbey and transact its public business two years before, though not solemnly installed and invested with

all the rights of abbot until the end of Edward's reign, in the beginning of the year 1066. He was one of those Englishmen, who could not submit to a foreign master, even had he ruled with justice and humanity; but the new king came in by that right which subsists only among men of the sword, and which among patriots and men of civil prudence, has not the claim to a shade of *right*. William, on his part, departed from this patriotic view of the natives so far, that from the first, the severity and tyranny of a haughty and cruel mind was manifested so much, as completely to alienate the minds of *all* his new subjects; whereby he found it necessary to hold that sword always drawn, which had first gained him the possession. His most solemn of engagements to rule the people according to rational equity and justice, he observed no longer than suited his purpose, when this had no influence, he trod honor, justice, and humanity beneath his feet; as innumerable instances in his reign will testify. In order to separate the English nobles, when he feared a conspiracy, he would rob one of his estate in England, and give him another in Normandy; and unite the Normans, such who were in military rank and fame, but unprovided for by fortune, to the rich heiresses of England; to the utter destruction of their male kindred.

The discontented and oppressed nobility began to unite for public defence,—those of the north, put themselves under the advice and direction of *Alfrid* Archbishop of York; whilst those of the south, considered the abbot of St. Alban, Wulstan, bishop of Worcester, with Watler bishop of Hereford, and many other nobles as united to protect their interests; their plan was to bring the new king to better terms if possible, or else to take arms and set on the throne Edgar Ethling or Athling, who in those days was called *Engelondes Dereling*, who in truth was the right and lawful heir of the crown, descended from the Royal Saxon family, who had last sat on the throne, but who had formerly retired into Hungary, although now returned to this country.

However not to wade through all the scenes of blood and horror occasioned by the vices of the king and the folly of his people, because it is foreign to our present view, let us only notice that *Stigand* the Saxon archbishop of Canterbury was thrown into prison and continued till he died, on the simple charge of usurpation,—whilst Lanfranc, abbot of Caen, induced to fill his vacant chair, was made privy counsellor and minister; Lanfranc, who went to Rome for his pall and vesture, returning, brought with him a relation,

some say his nephew, others his son, named Paul, who we shall hereafter find, was abbot of St. Albans.

The previously named confederation had however such an effect upon William, as to induce him to temporize with them; and by the advice of Lanfranc, he submitted to the terms they required, and consented to meet them at *Berkhampstude*, where in the presence of Lanfranc, he swore upon the relics of the church of ST. ALBAN, and Frederic administered to him the oath, "That he would observe inviolably all the ancient laws of the realm, which his pious predecessors, and especially the holy Edward, had established." The vow, which can bind the powerful and unjust, is yet, alas! to be discovered;—such was however the case of William, for his great men discovered no trust could be placed in his word or oath, so the chief men who had been concerned were constrained to fly to numerous places of refuge, Frederic the abbot flew to Ely, where he soon after died of mortification and grief.

The king kept the abbacy vacant for near the space of one year, committing great mischief and devastation on the manors, estates, and tenants of the same; he would even have destroyed the monastery itself,

beyond all possibility of recovery, had not Lanfranc restrained him.

In the year 1077, Lanfranc procured of the king this preferment for PAUL, his relation, who made the *fourteenth* Abbot from the foundation; and the *first*, after the Norman subjugation.

This abbot, within the first eleven years of his government, rebuilt the church, with all the adjacent buildings of the monastery, except the bake-house and mill-house: in those immense charges of building, he was much assisted by Lanfranc, who gave him for that purpose 1000 marks of 13s. 4d. each. But when it is said he rebuilt the church--this must be understood with some limitation: that the choir or body, the tower and steeple, and the east end, comprising the saints chapel, where stood in after times the martyr's shrine with the transept, north and south, and part of the nave as far down as the screen of abbot Wallingford,* these are the most rude of the Roman Saxogothic models we recollect to have seen, though many appear in this kingdom, of a date anterior to this fabric.

* Are presumed to have come within the intention of that author. The circumstance of the busts and arms of Lanfranc, and other benefactors to this church, ornamenting the columns below the Wallingford Screen, which separate the Southern aisle from the nave, come in to prove this fact. See *Clutterbuck's Herts*, vol. 1.

Anselm, Lanfranc's successor, assisted Paul in finishing the church, *quod imperfectum erat in ædificiis ecclesiæ Sancti Albani juit consummare*; and Paul who had already passed about twelve years in carrying on the works, completed in the four remaining years of his life all that he had begun. *Omnia quæ inæpit laudabiliter consummarit*. From hence, and other passages found in *M. Paris*, we are justified in this inference, that *this* was no mere repair, or enlargement; but a *complete reconstruction* of nearly the entire edifice of the church: with many other edifices of brick work. Paulus. *totem ecclesiam Sancti Albani cum multis ædificiis, opera construxit lateritio* ;*—thus applying the term brickwork, as many modern writers still do, to what is manifestly of the

* Newcome says "this construction is said to be built entirely of brick, i. e. of the Roman tile, this, he says, seems to intimate that the former church had been built of stone, taken out of the ruins of Verulam, originally brought from the *Totternhoe* quarries, where it was found by Paul, to be utterly decayed; which decay might have happened, not from old age, but from its being applied in an unskilful manner by Willegod, namely, in the opposite position to which it was produced in the quarry." He also ascribes the cause of the plain and rude style of Paul's building, to the difficulty of working his materials---Those would not admit of so many shapes, forms, and elegant curves as stone would, being too hard to cut, yet proper where strength and solidity were desirous. This, he says, accounts for the arches being semi-circular, but the semi-circular arch is surely characteristic of the *Saxon* order of architecture, and is its most prominent distinction.--He continues with a cornice pillar between two, where the inner surface of the walls would not admit of two courses; and why the edges of the great arches under the tower, are all void of the least degree of embellishment, or even variation.

Roman tile.—The reputation which the Abbey obtained under Paul's government, gave origin to many new benefactions to it; whilst his own influence was equal to enable him to obtain restitution of several estates, which had been by his predecessors lost or alienated. Indeed, Paul himself, made many gifts to the church, and adorned the space behind the high altar (*con cameratio*) with a stately painting. He also made various new ordinances for the government of his monastery, on the principles of his patron, archbishop Lanfranc; and among these, established several wholesome regulations, respecting the diet, cloathing and discipline of the monks.

Subsequent to the death of Paul in 1093, William Rufus, then king, retained the abbey in his own hands for four years, and applied its revenues to his own use, committing great waste on the abbey estates. At length RICHARD DE AUBENY, the *fifteenth* Abbot was appointed by him; the new church was consecrated in 1115. Henry the first, his queen Matilda, Geoffrey, archbishop of Rouen, the bishops of Durham, Lincoln, Sarum, and London, many abbots and inferior prelates, with many earls, barons, and nobles without number, were present at the ceremony; who were all lodged and entertained for eleven

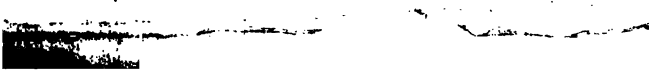
days, at the cost of the abbey;—the abbot, Richard, died in 1119, having previously built a small chapel and screen within the church, in honor of St. Cuthbert, by whose intercession he was supposed to have received a wonderful cure of a withered arm. In his time, this church was much indebted to him, from his having procured several valuable possessions; namely, the church of St. Mary of Wymundham, Norfolk, of Hatfield Peviral, and that of Melbroke, Bedfordshire, the manor of Tringhurst with its church in Berkshire, a village called Witstead; with land to the value of 30s. per annum at Wallingford, Berks, with the manor of Eastwell, in Kent.

This venerable abbot was very courageous in defending the rights of his abbey, as he was discrete and prudent in obtaining new acquisitions; and withal, he used his great influence in conciliating the tempers of different men, of views hostile to each other; thus following the blessed maxim of his great master, he effected peace between the two contending interests of the Normans and the Saxons, subdued their jealousies, and produced amity where war had threatened, with all its dreadful consequences!

In his time, it was customary for the parents of

families to place their younger children, being sons, in these religious communities, and when men of small estates, who could not provide for theirs, to grant in frank pledge a portion of land or tithes for their maintenance, whence we may account for one source of the vast wealth of religious establishments. They were beside, before the establishment of *Poor Laws*, the grand almoners of the nation: relieving the wants of the poor, the sick, the infirm, the aged, and distressed.

On the demise of Richard, who had governed the establishment 21 years, he was succeeded by the Prior of the abbey, named GEOFFREY DE GORHAM, who was the *sixteenth* Abbot, who was also of illustrious Norman descent, his family dwelt at Cæen; and he had been originally invited by the former abbot, to take the charge of a school belonging to the abbey, but delaying, the preferment was given to some other, and Geoffrey went to Dunstable; where was established in 1107, a number of canons regular, of St. Augustine, by Henry the first, and here De Gorham read lectures, &c. in the school of St. Catherine, whilst a secular; but suffering from a fire, he afterwards took the religious habit in our monastery. He was chiefly distinguished for attention



to the internal economy of the monastery, after his elevation; and for the providing rich vessels and various costly, and even splendid garments for the service of the church, and for the preparation of a very sumptuous shrine for the relics of St. Alban, into which, anno 1129, the remains of the martyr were removed with great solemnity: the ancient tomb being first opened in the presence of the Bishop of London, several Abbots, and the whole Convent. On this occasion, and to remove the doubts which had been excited by the assertions of a certain college in Denmark, and also by the pretensions of the monks of Ely, the bones were numbered, taken out and shewn singly; the head was lifted up for the inspection of all present, by the hands of the venerable Ralph, archdeacon of the church, on the fore part, was a scroll of parchment pendent from a thread of silk, with this inscription, *Sanctus Albanus*; the circle of gold inclosing the scull, fixed there by order of Offa, engraved with these words, *Hoc est caput Sancti Albani protomartyris Angliæ*. In reviewing the bones, the left scapula, or shoulder blade was wanting; however the translation was effected. Some years afterwards, the historian alleges, came two monks with letters credential, from the church and monastery of Naumburg (Nuremburg) in Ger-

many, saying that they were possessed of this valuable relic, (the scapula) and that the same had been brought to them many years ago by king Canute.* The abbot Geoffrey made several additions to the abbey buildings, and also founded the Nunnery at SORWELL, † and an *Hospital for LEPERS* on the London road, dedicated to *St. Julian*. This venerable abbot and great benefactor to the church, which he governed, had also taken care to provide books of all sorts, necessary for the service of the church; curiously written, in costly, splendid, and superb bindings.

* In the time of Ralph, Geoffrey's successor, the shrine was stripped of its decorations in order to provide a sufficient sum for the purchase of the Vil of Brentfield. The succeeding abbots Robert de Gorham and Symond embellished it anew, and the latter caused it to be somewhat more elevated, that its splendor might have a greater effect. Considering that the workmanship of this shrine must throw some light on the state of the arts in this country, in the reign of Henry the Second, we shall here describe it from *M. Paris*, who declares it to have been more splendid and noble than any other he had ever beheld. "In form it resembled an altar-tomb, having a crest or lofty canopy over it, supported on pillars that were of plate gold, shaped like towers, and having apertures to represent windows; the under part of the canopy was inlaid with crystals. Within the tomb was a coffin, containing the relics of St. Alban, inclosed in another case, the sides of which were embossed with gold and silver figures in high relief, exhibiting the principal events of the martyr's history. At the head of the shrine, which was towards the *East*, was a large representation of the crucifixion, having the figures of St. Mary and St. John at the sides, and ornamented with a row of very brilliant jewels, at the foot or west end of the shrine, was an image of the Virgin seated on a throne, with the infant Jesus in her arms;—the work apparently is of cast gold, highly embossed, and enriched with precious stones, and very costly bracelets." *Newcome's St. Albans*, v. l.p. 58, from *M. Paris*.

† Another cell founded by abbot

After noticing his chief failings, which appear to have been partial to some of his friends and relatives; his biographer sums up his character thus: "As we have seen Geoffery ruling the conventual body with great order, and regulating the economy of the monks; and improving the institution beyond the example and practice of any predecessor:"—So he also attained the first grant of the liberty given by Henry the 1st. that is the great civil power of holding pleas, and of taking cognizance of all less crimes and offences, which had been punishable only in the leets, the hundred, and the county courts; with a power of appointing a *Seneschallus*, or steward of the hundred; and of receiving for the use of the abbey all fines and amercements.

The *seventeenth* Abbot was RALPH DE GOBION—who had been one of the confidential, but domestic officers of the bishop of Lincoln, and though at that time a layman, had the care of the bishop's chapel, and was keeper of his treasury; by the bishops influ-

Geoffrey in 1140, was that of Sopwell; where, having observed two pious women to have erected a hut for their dwelling, he constructed a house for their better accommodation, and ordered that thirteen sisters should inhabit the same, under certain rules and orders, together with a chaplain. They were allowed a place of worship and a cemetery; and he allowed them certain rents and possessions: and because the two first women used to dip their dry bread in the water of a spring, the place was called *Sopwell*. Newcome's St. Albans, vol. 1. page 57.

nce he was admitted a monk in this abbey, but he remained in the service of the bishop, and for some time after, on the promise of the bishop to procure for him the abbey, if the bishop survived Geoffery. Here *Matthew Paris* complains that "the power and influence of bishops, hath at times been sufficient to dispose and direct all things in this church, even against its advantage." During the time he served the bishop of Lincoln, who was Alexander, the martial bishop, he attended the lectures of one Wodon, an Italian, who explained the Scriptures,—whence he became a lover of books, and furnished the church with many volumes. When abbot, he is acknowledged to have been a zealous defender of its privileges, rights and estates; he managed the revenue so well, that at his death the convent was clear of demands, and under no pecuniary obligation. He built some chambers adjoining the church, for the use of the abbot, of strong work, and caused the house to be covered with shingles of oak;—which intimates that tiles of modern use, were not then introduced, and probably not invented.

He went to France and met the pope Eugenius at Auxerre, and from whom he obtained a renewal of a former privilege, before given by his predeces-

sor Celestine, of peaceable possession and temporary security, against the avaricious and overbearing claims of the papal court. On his return, he purchased for the use of this church two large palls, of the value of ten marks each.

Having some suspicion of the ill conduct of *Alquise* the prior, about some table plate, he caused him to be deposed, and Robert de Gorham to be elected in his stead.

Ralph was abbot for no more than five years, so finding his end approaching, he resigned, and procured Robert de Gorham to be elected in his place. He died in July 1151, in the 14th year of the reign of king Stephen.

ROBERT DE GORHAM the *eighteenth* Abbot, was descended of a good family, at Caen, in Normandy, born of a sister of the late venerable abbot Geoffery of the same surname. From his having had information of the success of his relations in England, he came over from the convent in which he had been educated, with proper testimonials, when he was readily admitted a monk and brother of the church of St. Alban. Some time afterwards

he took the office of secretary, having in this capacity the care and repairs of the buildings;— in this function, he rebuilt the chapter house from the ground, and among other things he covered the greatest part of the buildings with lead, probably those oak shingles (*sendulis*) wherewithal it had been heretofore covered being destroyed. In the time of the last abbot, the present had been elected prior, which office was a representative of abbot in his absence, and on the resignation of Ralph, he was elected abbot by unanimous consent. On his installation he gave the church a pall, of ten marks value. He was very diligent in all matters relative to the property of the church: he caused religion and good order to flourish. King Stephen passing through St. Albans, was honorably entertained by him, when he procured the demolition of the royal manor of Kingsbury, it harbouring persons who under pretence of regal authority, were the cause of great disturbance, injury, and extortion in the town, convent and neighbourhood: on which the king gave the said castle or remains to the abbot, who caused the buildings to be demolished. King Henry the II, soon after his accession, being at Clarendon, the abbot Robert went thither, and petitioned him for a grant of the churches of Luton, and Hexton: to which the king consented,

and confirmed the same by charter, ordaining that the profits should be set apart for the entertainment of strangers.

At this period, pope Anastatius being dead, Adrian the IV, better known in England, as Nicholas Brekespear, was elected in his stead ; which pontiff was born at Langley, and had formerly been brought to this monastery to assume the habit of a monk, but was refused admission because insufficient in learning. The chief events of his history are the following,—and given on account of his high station, and being the first Englishman who had filled the pontifical chair. On his being rejected here, he went into Provence, became a canon in the house of St. Rufus, and soon after was elected to become their abbot ; hence he went to Rome to expedite business relative to his abbey, so far recommending himself to the pope, that he was made bishop of Albu, and then chosen by the cardinals to be pope. His father had become a monk in this monastery, probably after his son's departure, and the death of his wife, where he had resided fifty years, and was buried near the grave of the late abbot Richard, in the Chapter house. On receiving intelligence of the exaltation of his countryman, Robert thought it necessary to make a journey

to Rome, on purpose to pay his congratulations: it was also conceived necessary by the king, to encourage this embassy; nay, it is said, he commanded it, as being a compliment due from himself. The abbot departed with great presents of costly value, he nearly escaped shipwreck in the channel; but it is alleged by the historians, that from his interest with the blessed lady the Virgin Mother, and the martyr St. Alban, he was enabled to effect his landing. When he met the pope at Bonevertum, he presented the mitre and sandals, a portion of his presents; the sandals had been the ingenious production of the pious lady *Christina*, prioress of Markyate, near Dunstable, a convent built and founded by his, the present abbot's uncle.

The abbot, notwithstanding the misunderstanding which had existed between his predecessor and his holiness, was favorably received by the father of fathers, after some familiar discourse, the abbot presumed to ask for his part, and in behalf of his abbey, that "*in consequence of frequent troubles and vexations they endured from their bishop, (Lincoln) the Pope would be pleased to give them an exemption from all other authority, than that of his holiness himself.*" To this the Pope graciously assented, and withal gave to this monastery this singular preem-

inence; that "AS ST. ALBAN WAS DISTINCTLY KNOWN TO BE THE FIRST MARTYR OF THE ENGLISH NATION,—SO THE ABBOT OF HIS MONASTORIE SHOULD AT ALL TIMES, AMONG OTHER ABBOTS OF THE ENGLISH NATION IN DEGREE OF DIGNITY, BE REPUTED FIRST AND PRINCIPAL!"

On the return of the abbot, a synod was held at London, under Theobald the archbishop, where the bishop of Lincoln, *Robert de Quesceto*, i. e. of Chyenies, having heard that his authority at the abbey of St. Albans was set aside, refused to appear; but sent a messenger to plead his excuse, from weakness and ill health. This privilege occasioned great dis-sension between the bishop and abbot; and it was not until the eighth year of the same king, that it was finally adjusted, in the presence of the king, several bishops, and other nobles; when after much argument, it was proved that 'the church of St. Alban was *ingenua*, or freeborn, that the bishop of Lincoln had gradually exercised authority therein, by the negligence of former abbots; that such authority so long uncontroverted had almost become a legal right; but its legality was prescriptive only, and as there existed no statute, some recompense should be given for redemption of its liberties.' It was therefore a-

greed that some farm of ten pounds annual value should be given: this being the value of Tynhurst or Singest in Buckinghamshire, that estate was confirmed to the see of Lincoln, and its claims thereby annulled.

After the exemption given by Adrian to this abbey, the abbot had, and his successors after him *assumed the MITRE*; and twice in each year afterwards assembled his clergy, formed a synod and prescribed rules for their various cells and convents, episcopally habited;—but they left to bishops as before, all celebration of sacraments, ordination of priests, and consecration of oil, unctions, dedication of churches, altars, and blessings of the abbot. The next year, the venerable bishop of St. Asaph, (Godfrey,) consecrated in the presence of the convent, oil in the eucharist at the great altar, to be distributed as formerly, but acting in no respect as the bishop of Lincoln; the bishop of St. Asaph then held an ordination in the chapel of the infirmary, in the great church, he also dedicated the altar of Holy Cross. So that it should seem this distinction was the most prominent feature of difference between these mitred abbots and the actual bishops: When given to any abbot, it did not place

him on a parity with the bishop, although the king always called such to a seat among the barons of the realm: but the abbot and monastery were exempt from episcopal visitation and diocesan jurisdiction; the abbots then took on themselves to govern the seculars under their care, and left the bishop to perform certain ministerial functions in the abbeys, to govern parochial clergy, without an authority over vicars, or the officiating clergy of churches belonging to those abbeys; because such clergy were always members of the monastic body, and sent to perform the sacred office in churches. And it has been conjectured, that this was the usage subsequent to the time when vicarages were endowed, and made a separate estate, unless when the instrument of endowment, which required the consent of the bishop and king,—the obedience of the vicar was thereby transferred to the bishop, which, doubtless was often the case.

This elevation of an abbot to the mitre happened anno 1161, the 7th of Henry II. The abbot Robert had the remainder of his life embittered by the secular concerns of the abbey, and chiefly from numerous of his tenants, Laurence abbot of Westminster, Peter de Valoignes, Robert his son, with others, and

the Earl of Arundel respecting his, the abbot's right to visit the cell of Wymundham; also with Hugo abbot of Ely, about precedency, and to us, other idle quarrels with men whose rights do not appear to have been ascertained. He ruled the abbey for 15 years, and died of a pleurisy 20th Oct. 1166.

This abbot was buried at the foot of abbot Paul in the chapter-house, which he had rebuilt, and also certain other monastic edifices; however upon the rebuilding of this house, his historian says, the ashes of these venerable men were commixed with common clay.

“Without a monument or inscription stone.

Their form, their fame, their names,—almost unknown!”

Such alas! is the fate of mitres and of crowns! so do the glories of this transient scene pass away;—whilst virtue alone survives the insatiate rage of the great travellers *death* and *time*!—The contest between the crosier and the sceptre for power was now in its zenith, the intrepid Henry the II, the present king, who had manfully withstood the conscience binding influence of papal thunder, was now determined to exercise what he *believed* to be his RIGHT, he accordingly, therefore, kept the abbacy vacant for several months; in this interval, the functions of the

head, were, as it were, put into commission, being entrusted to the prior, the steward Adam, and other brethren. The church was so much burthened with debt, that when an account was drawn out by the legal officers, there appeared due to Christians and Jews, 600 marks. This bad state of its accounts, has been thought to be properly attributable to the numerous disputes, litigations and difficulties in which it had been unfortunately involved.

It had been usual upon nomination of an abbot, to obtain the sanction of the pope, previous to investiture or induction; but now it will seem, the monks feared the power of the king, in as much, as they petitioned him for *leave* to elect a successor; after the elapse previously named, the king wrote to the bishop of London,* commanding him to go down, and that "Having procured a nomination of three persons, he should make report to the king of their true character and abilities, and of the real state of the monastery; that he, the king, might choose whom he liked best."

This the bishop performed; and the king appointed SYMOND, the *nineteenth* Abbot. In June he recei-

* Gilbert Foliot was then bishop.

and the form of benediction from the bishop, and being invested in the proper habits, he was enthroned.

This is observed, by the historian, to be a new mode of election; but as the contest ran high between the king and Becket,—this was one of those instances wherein the king determined to shew that proud prelate that he could make and invest abbots without his assistance, or the pope's interference. This abbot Symond was an Englishman by birth, if local birth can give an eminency,—but he appears to have possessed it, upon more certain grounds,—bred from his infancy in this monastery,—perfectly conversant with its rules, and customs, and withal possessing all the erudition then most in esteem, and eminent for wisdom and sobriety. He took great pains to have plenty of good books, for which purpose he employed many scribes and copyists, and established a library, in a place called the almonry; he likewise ordained that all future abbots should employ *one* scribe at least.

It should be remembered that in those days there was no screen at the top of the choir, that the great altar stood where the rails and table now stand, and the shrine was now the consistory; so that it was all open, even from Cuthbert's screen. Symond cau-

sed the shrine to be a little elevated for a better view and to appear distinctly before the eye of the priest; who, when celebrating mass, stood or knelt with his back to the people and west of the altar.

This position of the shrine was most splendid to the eye of the beholder, and meant to raise the devotion of the priest,—to this purpose also the decollation of St. Alban was painted opposite. This venerable man, Symond, occupied in those imposing works of religious peace, after warmly espousing the cause of Becket, from a conscientious conviction, in this struggle between the prince and the prelate, for the authority given the church, which the latter asserted in opposition to regal supremacy, which indulgence the conqueror William had allowed, upon this, the church had, it is presumed, gone on adding estates to their then present possessions, subjecting the consciences of men to their rule and directory; their whole temporal as well as spiritual concerns being thus given to the sacred power, to answer best their views,—they had set up the dangerous doctrines of that supposed sanctity to withdraw allegiance with duty; and even to dethrone the king.

After our abbot had been imposed upon to believe

that he had discovered the remains of Amphibalus and his fellow sufferers upon Redbourn Green, the bones were brought to the abbey, when miracles were performed,—strange even in those miraculous days! This religious abbot died A. D. 1183, after he had ruled the monastery for 15 years, leaving the abbey greatly in debt to Israelites and Christians; *Warwin*, *Warrin*, or *Warring*, succeeding him.

WARWIN, who was descended from an ordinary family in Cambridge, was the *twentieth* Abbot, he had at an early age acquired much reputation for his learning and piety, and it is said he was no less remarkable for the accomplishments of his person. Before he was admitted of any society, he had studied physic with his brother Matthew at Salernum, it being the first theatre of the healing art in Europe, after it had been brought from Arabia to Africa, and thence to Italy. It was in Africa that the first separation of pharmacy from medicine took place; where, it was probable, the celebrated *Constantius Afer* had been instrumental in its introduction to southern Italy; who being a Carthaginian, had learned the art of medicine from the Arabians; he came to Italy, A. D. 1086, where he was a benedictine monk in the monastery of Monte Cassino. After this time, it be-

came the fashion in monasteries for their monks to learn the healing art; at least, so far as to prepare medicine. They accordingly officiated for the rich and took a fee, but served the poor *gratis*, except they wanted expensive medicine. *

For the purpose of becoming adepts in medicine, it seems probable our abbot with his brother and their nephew were studying physic in Italy, as an essential qualification for a *religious* habit in their own country. However, it was, that the two brothers their nephew, and two of their associates came to the resolution of entering as monks in the abbey of *St. Alban*: which we are told, they did each of them accomplish, except the nephew, who continued a secular, kept a school in the town of *St. Alban*, living in good fame and character, and died at a house near *Sopwell*. His school was so great in fame, that it was not surpassed by any in the kingdom at that time, in the number of its scholars, or in the utility of the sciences taught there. He, the nephew, had also applied himself much to the study of the decretals and church law, having access to the libraries, in the power of his uncles. These three men

* *Williams's Inventions and Discoveries*. See article *Apothecarius*, vol. 2. page 143.

had acquired great interest and esteem among persons of all ranks : they were termed by the envious, *the three-fold cord that could never be broken.*

The election of Warwin the elder, to the abbot's chair, passed with the universal consent of his brethren, except one dissenting voice, that of Martel the Sacrist, who, himself had aspired to the dignity.

Warwin, ruled the abbey for twelve years ; the most remarkable of his deeds, and for which he is said to have been condemned, was his founding of the cell and church of St. Mary de Pratis, which he is said to have done at the instance of some man who pretended that he had in a vision seen Amphibalus, who had requested "that he might have some place dedicated to his honor, for that he had been the instructor and converter of the great Alban." Warwin complied, founded the hospital, with proper offices, a church, and gave a chaplain and clerk for the use of thirteen poor leprous women ; it was named *de pratis*, from its situation, being placed at the extremity of the plowed land and adjoining the meadows of Kingsbury : with offices on both sides of the highway. The allowance to this establishment was a certain quantity of winter corn and of

malt per week, with clothes, and a little money from the steward of the monastery. The motives of the beneficial Warwin, are presumed to have been suggested as well by the desire to relieve wretched sufferers under that incurable calamity the leprosy, as much as to honor Amphibalus. To appease whose manes it is recorded that the holy relics of that martyr, and his companions were removed with great solemnity on the 8th of the calends of July, 1186, from the place where Symond had deposited them to be inclosed in a new shrine richly adorned with gold and silver. Symond had placed these relics on the right side of the great altar in one coffin, but now Warwin gave them separate inclosures. These, with the remains of the three companions of Amphibalus and six other martyrs, were all buried near each other, and near to Amphibalus, who was next the wall on the right of the great altar, near the rood-loft, on which was a rude carving representing Amphibalus suffering.

Early in the abbacy of Warwin, it is presumed, Wallerde Constance, then bishop of Lincoln, renewed the claim of spiritual jurisdiction in right of his bishopric;—at this period, the feast of Easter, when the king usually spent his holidays at some religious

se or other, he happened to be with his queen and
 at St. Albans. With his sovereign and queen
 abbot was a great favorite. The king desired to
 the monks and whole body of the monastery as-
 ssembled, when they met, the king seated himself in the
 r of the abbot in the midst of the room, with the
 ot on his right hand, and the bishop of Lincoln
 is left; he then bowed on either side very graci-
 y by way of salutation, entreating them to "pray
 incessant prayers for the safety of himself, his
 an and children, and also for the state of the
 m." To this the whole convent most devoutly
 sented, acknowledging they were bound to per-
 this duty by every tie of gratitude. Then the
 op of Lincoln rose up, and addressing himself to
 king, said—that "he begged leave to proffer a
 mplaint to his majesty, which was, that he was
 eatly injured, and the church of Lincoln shame-
 lly mutilated, by cutting off from it so noble a
 ember as this monastery. With your permission,
 must move a question against this abbot. What-
 er my predecessor did, who was simple and easy,
 was circumvented in the same; as the world well
 ows, that this church is subject to the church of
 ncoln; and whatever has been done in error, it is
 and expedient that the same be recalled." The

abbot hearing this, laid his bare hand on the knee of the king without rising, and said—"Your majesty is the pledge of my peace, the witness and mediator of the compromise which was begun and confirmed between us."—The king arose, and energetically replied,—“By the eyes of God! I was present at the agreement,—What is it, my lord of Lincoln, you would attempt?—do you think these things were done in secret?—I myself, and the most chosen men of the realm were present: and what was then done is ratified by writings the most incontestible, and confirmed by the testimony of the nobles.—The determination stands good, and whoever sets himself to combat this abbot and monastery, combats me. What seek you?—to touch the pupil of mine eye?”—On which the bishop found himself thunder struck, and uttered not a word more, nor was any question on that subject ever moved again: and from that day to this, Lincoln hath never made any claims;—but at the dissolution, when the power of the abbot was abrogated and annulled, all places and churches under his jurisdiction, and constituting the archdeaconry of this church, were together, with all churches in the liberty of St. Alban, annexed to the London diocese.*

* Newcome's History of St. Albans, vol 1. page 82.

From this circumstance, the familiar intimacy which existed in those days between the sovereign and his higher order of clergy, may be collected; and some idea may be from hence gathered of the esteem held by the king for our abbot and this monastery, who would not suffer any obstruction or diminution of honor to his host.

Warwin made several alterations in the economy of the house, and furnished many new regulations for the observance of his monks, he also is remarkable for directing a *new* regulation in the funerals of these religious:—before his time, it should seem they were buried naked in the earth, he directed they should have more decent inhumation, in coffins of stone; with the original motive for this order, as well as respecting his failings although spoken of by his contemporaries and others who have followed them, we have nothing to do. He was very indulgent to the monks and inferior members of the house.

Warwin gave to his successor 100 marks, for repairing the building of the west front of the church; with dutiful gratitude he also acted to his prince, and with a becoming and conscientious dignity to his church; when, upon king Richard (Cœur de Lion) having been

taken prisoner in his return from the Holy Land, the king had sent an order to his council to demand in his name from all monasteries, bishops and clergy in England, all their silver cups to make a sum for his ransom: this abbot sent to the king 200 marks of silver; being unwilling to impoverish his abbey, or to mutilate the splendour of its appearance: and yet desired to shew gratitude to his sovereign: Warwin supported his rule with a superb and becoming dignity, he would never temporize, or submit too much, or would he connive at the loss of any of the hereditary possessions of his house: he ruled the abbey for 12 years, and died A. D. 1195.

The successor to the last abbot, (in the chronological series, the *twenty-first*) was JOHN OF THE CELL, or JOHN OF STUDHAM, having been born at Markyate, a Cell, not far from Studham; a man of extraordinary piety, and a most rigid observer of monastic rules; for that reason, saith my author, in order to revive the discipline of the cloister, and recover the credit of the abbey: which, it appears, was then *thought*, to have suffered decay.

In his younger days, he had studied at Paris, with such success, that his reputation on his arrival in his

native country, was, indeed, superlative ; being considered a very Priscan in grammar,—in poetry, a perfect Ovid ; and in physic, a second Galen. Thus connecting in one human being the feigned attributes of Apollo : for he was not deficient in music, as we shall hereafter see. He had taken the character of religious, and was advanced to be prior of Wallingford, a cell to this abbey, from whence he was elected to govern the parent establishment. Upon his investiture, he committed the care of the cloister and of the internal government to Raymond the prior, a man of good counsel, and esteemed prudent and religious ; and to the steward *cellerius* named Roger Parker he entrusted its terrestrial concerns, thus by deputing others to take those chief charges upon them, he reserved to himself that time which he could properly employ in the more serious offices of contemplation and devotion.


It should appear, that the grand entrance in the west front had fallen to dilapidation since the period of its foundation : and last reconstruction by Paul ; and probably this defect, in its then present state, was occasioned more from the injudicious application of the materials, than from the injuries of time, in 118 years. This ruinous state, doubtless furnished the last abbot with the motive for contributing towards

the repairs, as we find he had done.—This entire building had been completely re-built between the years 1077 and 1115; The partial repairs, alterations and what were presumed to be improvements, which had taken place, at various periods, and particularly after the re-building this front at the time now contemplated, will, probably, account for the diversity of style, or the heterogeneous character of building observed in this venerable edifice.

The present abbot, did not however confine himself to the reconstruction of the west end only, but he began to enlarge the fabric in that direction, perhaps up to the fourth column inclusive, as the relation of *M. Paris* testifies; and who, that historian proves, involved himself and his monastery in the most severe embarrassments, from the magnitude of the plan on which the work had commenced. Nor is it improbable to believe, that in the progress of this building some important alterations were made in the originally projected design; for the purpose of introducing into the work the highly ornamented taste then beginning to prevail. The hundred marks given by the last abbot went but little way towards this extensive alteration, they were soon spent with many more, and even before the foundation had

risen above the ground. This and the projected alterations, which are previously suggested, as were likely to have taken place, were actually made by Hugo de Godclif at the head of the masons, (*Comentaria*) when it was seen he was preparing many expensive mouldings and ornaments, this produced some dispute, and the undertaking, for the present, was abandoned. The nerve of labour being wanting,—it is probable the artificers refused to work.

The abbot, then assigned the work to the care of one of the brethren, named Gilbert de Eversholt, and imposed an annual tax of a sheaf of corn for every acre sown on the abbey estates; this tax was first levied in the third year of John's abbacy, and it continued during his whole life, and seventeen years more; this was however made quite to the wishes of the pious abbot: he had held out the temptation of many presents of gold and silver, to any person who would forward the works; this promise was proclaimed through all lands of the abbey, as well as to some of the diocese, without success, so that he was at length compelled to resort to a species of duplicity, which no other situation could palliate, except for reasons of state, and which nothing could justify. He sent out one *Amphibalus* to travel about



with relics, and he was instructed to pretend he had been raised from the dead, by the merits of Alban and Amphibalus, and was able to give good proof of their miracles. In that age of superstitious darkness he collected by these means, large sums of money, but all proved inadequate. Subsequent to the death of Eversholt, the building was once more suspended, but had a recommencement under the superintendence of William Sisseverne, who is noticed for receiving great supplies for their work, although its progress was so very slow that it is recorded it did not advance above two feet in any one year. It should also be remembered, that besides these works in the church, there were also some very extensive repairs and rebuildings, performed in the monastery at that identical period.

These necessary expenditures about the church and monastic buildings, greatly embarrassed the treasury of the establishment, which was grievously heightened by the unconstitutional exaction of King John and his minions, who in one single year on various pretences, obtained from it no less than 1100 marks.

Our venerable John, however, was distinguished by little besides trouble, during his whole life ; for

the abbey was again in his time annoyed by the fraudulent demands of several tenants and other exactions. Nay, even when upon his death bed, he was not suffered to depart in peace, but was charged with mis-management by his monks, which charge, it appeared, was without foundation.

This abbot died in the year 1214, having obtained a good reputation for devotion and sanctity, so much so, it is true, that it is recorded of him, that when he sang alone, the responses were made by angels !

The *twenty-second* Abbot, in a regular succession, was WILLIAM DE TRUMPINGTON, who obtained his investiture by the influence of a powerful relation, but was not installed until November 1215: because the then existing law held all vacant bishopricks, and abbacies on the death of the incumbents, by which the Lord Keeper received for the crown the profits thereof.

In the month after his installation, King John assembled a council of his adherents in the chapter-house of this abbey, to concert measures for regaining his authority, which he had lost by signing *the great Charter*; however, in justice to the memory

of our abbot, it should be observed, that from the circumstance of his then recent elevation, he must *seem* to meet the wishes of the monarch, so far, as to accommodate him with the place for council; the able and industrious Newcome adds, "But I find not that our abbot took any part in these transactions: indeed, he had been so lately advanced, and owed his preferment so much to the king, through the recommendation of his kinsman,—that William could not make a declared opposition to the king. And though several bishops and abbots joined the barons, and with them assembled at Stamford, then at London, and subsequently at Staines, yet it is probable that he staid at home, and quietly governed his little kingdom."

Soon afterwards a second council was held by the king in the chapter house, when he had procured the sanction of Rome to annul the charter he had signed at *Runnymede*, and when Langton the archbishop and the patriotic barons had been excommunicated, the king breathed fury against these and other malecontents; accordingly, at this second council, two armies were resolved to be levied, one to oppose the refractory Londoners, and the other to meet the baronial army and their mercenaries, un-

der Lewis the Dauphin, who had joined the rebel Barons against their tyrannical sovereign in the north.

Speedily following this, the Dauphin honored the abbot with a personal visit: after salutation, the prince proposed that as he was already in possession of a great part of the kingdom; he, the abbot, should do homage to him, and consent to acknowledge him as his sovereign." The abbot refused, "unless he could be absolved from his allegiance to his former and lawful prince;" the Dauphin threatened,—William was still firm,—when the prince threatened to burn the abbey and the whole town, here Saher,* or, as called *Sayer*,† William's former friend, interposed and softened the rage of the blustering prince; finally by the sacrificing of eighty marks, the abbot saved his abbey and the town.

During the fury of civil war, the abbey and town were again in great danger from the lawless fury of a popular partizan of these times named Falco, or Falcauius de Brent, who with a gang of desperate and depraved fellows committed outrages here: *i. e.* slew one of the abbot's servants in the very church; after robbing the town, they roasted one of the towns-

* As named by Chaucer.

† Newcome.

men alive. This fierce invader before he would depart, exacted 100 marks from the abbot. This crew, afterwards, it appears, met with their just desert, as most of his followers were hung at Bedford, and himself driven out a beggar and vagabond for life.

In the end of the year 1215, a summons of the pope to a general council was complied with; among English prelates went our abbot, taking with him Alexander Appleton and Roger Porretan, brethren of fame for their learning and experience, with the abbot of Westminster. The chief business of this council was to facilitate the speed and promote the means for the success of the Holy War, but as numerous subjects of a domestic nature were also discussed, one day, whilst the pope was in council, and all were present, our young abbot arose, and the subject of debate being the mass, with circumstances attending it, he begs leave to put a question; which he said, "was to be informed whether it was lawful for those abbots whose churches were possessed of the body of some Saint, to mention his name also, in conjunction with other intercessors and advocates at the throne of God?"—to which the pope, with some circumspection answered,—"That it was proper and agreeable to right, that the saint, his name, and intercession,

“should be in its proper place demanded, in the solemnity of mass.” Upon the solution of this question the whole assembly united in applause, and gave their thanks to our abbot, but particularly those who possessed such relics, for instance St. Edmond’s and Durham are mentioned.

The pope, on the rising of the council enquired who that ingenious young abbot was, who had put the question; being told he was the abbot of St. Albans, in England: his holiness paid him many compliments for the weighty matter of the question and the prudence of his address: on which Porretan advised the abbot to resign his abbey, as being sure of promotion from the pope. “No,—replies William,—I learn wisdom from the experience of others: you did so, with regard to your abbey at Bath, but never got any thing after.”—The pope sent for William to a private audience, which he with joy obeyed: “What?” saith his holiness, are not you the abbot of St. Albans, which hath obtained from us such great privileges and benefactions?—I cannot suffer a man of such eminence to depart, without a more especial compliment being paid me,” and refused to let him go, without laying at the feet of his holiness one hundred marks!

However, to leave particular instances, and revert to general facts;—it appears, that soon after the abbot's return, the civil government being more settled,—he directed his attention to the abbey church, and besides the completion of the west end, 'finishing the same with its roof and arches,'—he made a general repair of the whole fabric. 'He altered the forms of many of the windows in the side walls, and repaired the transept, making at each end a great window, suitable in form and fashion; and the advantage of the light from them made an appearance as though the church had been rebuilt.' He also heightened the tower, and most probably, raised on it the small spire now standing; besides varying the flat surface on the outside, by a pilaster, extending from the leads up the middle of each front.

Saint Cuthbert's chapel, in the interior, was also rebuilt by this abbot, of hewn stone; over it was erected a small dormitory, the finely wrought screen still bearing St. Cuthbert's name, and which exhibits the place of this saint's altar, is to him also attributable: as from the style of workmanship, it is observed, demonstrates it to be of his age. The names of the artists on record, who were concerned in the improvements, are Richard de Thydenhanger, treasurer of

the abbey, Matthew de Cambridge, keeper of the great seal, and Walter de Colchester, the sacrist,—the latter was famous in several sister arts.* The battlements and turrets, were added in this abbacy. In conformity with our *title*,—(and not because it is essential to the object of the present enquiry,) we observe, this excellent abbot whose character was properly appreciated by all who knew him, and whose memory was eulogized by the tears and heart-felt grief of contemporary survivors, more than it could have been by the most laborious panegyric, for inheriting and exercising all those virtues which dignify the christian, adorn and elevate the man,—“after he had ruled his church with prosperity and honor for 20 years and 3 months, he died on St. Matthew’s day A. D. 1235. But he was not buried till March following, when his obsequies were performed with all possible honors by the abbot of Waltham. This funeral was delayed,” we are informed, “to do the greater honors to the man whom they had dearly loved: besides a due preparation for the election of a successor, and the appearing of priests and others from a distance. For the purpose of keeping the body, it was embalmed, after the juices and moistures had quitted it; the body was clothed, i. e.

* M. Paris bears testimony to his proficiency in painting and sculpture.

dressed in the principal habits, with a mitre on the head, gloves and ring on the hands, under the right arm his usual staff, the hands placed across, and sandals on the feet. All persons were admitted into the choir, or presbytery; they had leave to behold and mourn their lost friend. The body remained with as vivid a countenance as when alive, and most awful lamentations were made, not only by the monks, but by the laymen.—'These were true and genuine sorrows, for no man was more beloved.'*

It should be noticed that at about A. D. 1219, the *institution or endowment of vicarages*, was, in England a new thing: and the abbey having the church of *Luton* with its tithes, had instituted a VICAR, in the stead of sending an occasional preacher, as they had heretofore done, without having first ascertained his rights, or clearly fixed the revenue necessary for his support; nor would the abbey allow of the authority of the diocesan over the vicar. This circumstance had furnished a subject for contest and litigation, and a very long and expensive suit, had just terminated: being hastened to its conclusion, by the mediation of Richard bishop of Salisbury, and the two abbots of Westminster and Waltham. Who

* Newcome, from M. Paris.

determined that the vicar should be presented by the abbey to the bishop of Lincoln, to be approved by him and instituted:—that his maintenance should arise from some fixed property,—namely, all the small tithes and obventions, that he should be furnished with a suitable mansion and glebe, and be entitled to all the obventions paid or given at the chapels belonging to the church of Luton; and pay all parish dues, procurations and synodals; and that the bishop of Lincoln and his successors should have full jurisdiction in the said church.

Also, with regard to cells, which had usually claimed an exemption from the bishop, and acknowledged no superior besides their abbot, it was ordained by these judges, that whenever any prior should be appointed by the abbot, the individual should be presented to the bishop in whose diocese the same cell was situate, and receive from his hands the spiritual administration, and be subject to all the functions of the parish church, and payment of tenths or the like duties, in regard to which, he was bound to acknowledge the bishop as his lawful diocesan.—This was *now* ordained, but it became a general observance afterwards, wherever a cell was united like a mansion and glebe to a parish church: but if it had no con-

nection with a parish church, it owed no such obedience, and was subject purely to the abbey.

This abbot caused many altars with very exquisite carvings to be made by that incomparable carver, Walter de Colchester;* and he instituted several new regulations in the services, in honor of the saints, procured many relics, particularly a rib of St. Wulstan, which was inclosed in gold and laid on his altar.†


In further performance of our promise in the title, and because the present appears to have been the period when the religion of Rome had acquired its highest elevation, it may not be improper to subjoin the remarks thereon which follow.

Abbeys and monasteries, cathedral churches, and bishop's sees, were always founded by charter, whoever were the authors or contributors thereto. They may also be considered as corporations for the better furtherance of religion; and being intended to have succession and perpetuity, they were established with all the strength and firmness which the law of the land could give: endowments in their aid were also ratified

* M. Paris.

† It is observed the means are unknown by which the abbot came possessed of this relic.

with a like authority;—in the Saxon times, the great nobles and officers of state consented to and subscribed to the same. Election of abbots and also of bishops were originally in their poverty, confined to the brethren and conventual body; but when these heads and superiors became rich, and held lands of the crown, the principal, whether bishops or abbots, were placed in council on the footing with peers and nobles, by reason of their temporal possessions: then the king became interested in the see, and would not grant the temporalities without approving of the tenant. The next step, both with Saxon and Norman kings, was to grant leave to elect and to recommend, and it stood on this footing, (though not without interruption from the popes,) until, in the reign of Henry the II. the pope assumed the whole power to himself: and though succeeding kings struggled against this usurpation, yet papal authority generally prevailed, until Henry the VIII. when the legislature resumed this power, and placed it beyond all controversy in the regal head of the church. But whoever appointed; the confirmation always came from Rome: and since bishops and abbots were but different branches of the same holy church, the pope made equal claims to the right and privilege, as the head and ruler of that church, to terminate and settle all



disputes in the election of these subordinate rulers; and generally made them pay a good price to obtain a quiet possession.

It has appeared that the christian religion had flourished in Britain previous to the ingress of the Saxons; yet it is understood that there are few traces of either bishopricks or abbeys, in those ancient times. However, the most ancient seems to have been Glastonbury, Banchor, Caerleon, and Amesbury, in Wilts,* then probably Winchester, where a cathedral was founded to our AMPHIBALUS about A. D. 303. St. David's was also of that time: all these are presumed to have been great seminaries of the church, as well as for philosophy, and all the sciences and arts then known: for those institutions, besides their being places where religion was taught, had each of them schools for instruction. It is also presumed, they were each of them of the secular order; because the power of Rome does not appear to be *known* to the British church previous to the arrival of Augustine in the seventh century.†

However, the great establishment of cathedrals and

* See Williams's "Lives of Patriotic Princes;" Life of CARACTACUS, vol. I. which contains numerous important facts as to this question.

† As previously stated.

monasteries were reserved for the Saxon period: it is astonishing to behold how many of the great endowments of both were made by Augustine, his followers and converts. In that æra were founded the sees of Canterbury, Rochester, London, York, Hereford, Lincoln, Litchfield, Norwich, Worcester and Durham. In the same century many monasteries were founded, and indeed, in every century down to the period of Henry V. the number of which, of above £200 a year, was two hundred, at the dissolution; and the small ones, besides priories, charteries, cells and other monkish establishments, amounted to eight hundred and more. At least this reason will account for the small number of the former, in comparison with the latter. The former were established as the seminaries of the church; whilst the latter were produced from a selfish principle in the people; since the monastic order had introduced the opinion of the necessity of intervention by middle men to prayers for the souls of the dead,—or to have the prayers of the priest, who being presumed holy, was thought to have influence in the court of Heaven; which he expected to have daily made for him between his death and the Day of Judgment. This reminds us of a verse in Virgil where Anna the sister of Dido says,

*Hæu sacri valum errores numina nobis
Elicunt, spondent que novis medicumne cuius.*

"O, soothing priestcraft! O the close disguise
"Of cheat, imposture and well varnished lies!
"With a pretended zeal the shades they implore,
"The gods of night demurely they adore;
"With promis'd cures they gall our easy minds,
"A solemn vow, which holy knavery binds." DRYDEN.

It should be noticed, that most of these foundations previous to the conquest, were of the Benedictine order; or, if not, this class nominally, they were of sects emanating from it, as from a common parent: such were the Cestertians, Pamontatonsians, Cluniacs, Augustine Canons, Carthusians and Gilbertines, these were all introduced under the auspices of the conqueror or succeeding kings, chiefly from the principal French abbeys, and were literally but modifications of the Benedictine order. They were all under the direction of a head called a *Provincial*. But all the monastic orders considered the pope their *temporal*, as well as *spiritual* head.

Though the monks and the secular clergy, were all branches springing from the same stem, yet there was perpetual enmity between them: one envying and maligning the other,—on the supposition that the adversary enjoyed more advantages. The seculars possessed a freedom in their parochial cures, which the monks had not; and the latter, from carrying away tithes, owning lands, and manors, were

presumed by the former to be more rich, opulent, full, and easy.

On the day upon which William was consigned to the earth, three of the most discreet brethren were dispatched to the king, to entreat leave to proceed to a new election : leave was obtained, and the election took place on the Wednesday week after the annunciation, when JOHN OF HERTFORD, the *twenty-third* Abbot in order of succession, who was the prior of the cell in that place, was duly elected, and the election confirmed by the Roman pontiff. He endured great oppressions from a variety of powerful individuals.—He nevertheless found means to make several considerable additions to the abbey buildings, and to the conveniences of the monastery, which buildings, it is remarked, he furnished with *chimneys*: it is likewise noticed, that this is the first mention of that convenience which occurs in our annals.* In the time of this abbot, Henry III. was frequently entertained here : he seldom departed, it is said, without bestowing some present upon the church. In May 1248, by charter, dated Woodstock, he granted liberty of *free Warren* to the abbot and his successors in all their demise lands throughout

* See Williams's *History of Inventions and Discoveries*, v. 2. p. 296.

England: and empowered them to inflict a penalty of £10. on all persons who should hawk or hunt thereon without their license. In 1250, as recorded by Hollingshed, a great earthquake was felt in this town and its vicinity. In 1259, the abbey lost one of its most valuable members, MATTHEW PARIS, its Historian: called the pride and glory of this monastery, second to none in all reputable learning; and in the following year it had the misfortune to lose its present abbot, who had ruled the monastery with much honor for twenty-five years, and who died on the 17th of April, 1260, and was buried in the church with great pomp, suitable to such a prelate. He left an irreproachable character behind him.

The thirteenth century produced many great events in the church; but particularly it was distinguished by the high power and preeminence of the papal authority,—its exactions, and unprecedented extortions. This period was eminent for the creation of two *new* religious orders, intended to supply all other defects. Although the council of *Lateran* in 1215, had decreed with unanimous consent, *that no new order should be established or created*: yet the exigence of the times produced the *Friar Preachers*, and the *Friar Minors*; which bodies were not beheld by the

world like the drones, who lived on the honey of the land, but were active, busy, learned, and ingenious; teaching against heretics, and creating a degree of admiration and consequence which had not been seen before in any of the monastic orders. It was a wise institution for the intended purpose, the rejection of the seats of *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*, and their success was greatly promoted by the pope. The *Justinian Pandects*, or codes of Roman law had been introduced to England in the time of Stephen, *Gratians* decretals of the canon law, had been studied at *Bologna* only, these are now taught at Paris, the chief university then existing, and these had found their way to England also, and as the works of *Aristotle*, were new in this part of the world. The sciences contained in those books, furnished the early fathers with all subjects which were worthy to be designated learning, wisdom, and religion. Schools were opened by these friars for instruction of youth, and they procured Universities to be founded: the bishop of Ely, *Hugo de Baham*, now collected the scattered students of Cambridge, and founded St. Peter's college, in 1275: the same was done in 1262 in Oxford by Baliol, and other founders went on this plan: all calculating for the furtherance of religious knowledge,

and the more efficacious instruction in the arts and sciences.

These acquisitions to former intelligences produced the many ingenious men, called school men; as, *Albert the Great* of Cologne, *Peter Lombard* of Paris; *Thomas Aquinas* and *Bonaventure* in Italy; and *Friar BACON* at Oxford. The works of these men were the standards of divinity and philosophy, till the revival of Greek and Roman literature.

The previous observations are made for the purpose of shewing that these new and improved species of learning had not as yet formed part of the literature hitherto studied in this abbey. Which is said not to have had above two or three learned and ingenious men, besides *M. Paris*, in its walls in this century: as learning and the sciences were foreign to this institution, whose business consisted in prayer for the dead, leaving all concerns for the living to secular attention.

The next Abbot, in numerical succession, the *twenty-fourth*, was *ROGER DE NORTON*; in his time, *St. Albans* was put in a fortified state; with all its avenues strongly barricaded;—to prevent the ravages

occasioned by the baronial wars. Tumults however arose in the town, respecting the abbey mills, which the towns-people wished to use as *Fulling Mills*, contrary to the desire of the abbot; those differences, were however adjusted by the interference of the queen: but they had already proved fatal to Gregory de Stokes, the constable of Hertford Castle, who rashly entering the town, with a few attendants, and conducting himself therein indiscreetly, by making foolish speeches, he was seized, and with his followers beheaded, and their heads stuck upon poles at the chief entrances to the town. In this outrage, the inhabitants were amerced in 100 marks. During this abbacy, the infirmary was re-built, and the church and monastery additionally embellished, at great cost. He died after ruling the church 30 years, A. D. 1290, and although his abbacy had been expensive, from repairs and immunities granted to several places within its dominion, yet he did not leave the establishment 100 marks in debt.

According to the Walsingham MSS. in this abbey, the church was restrained by the vigorous administration of Edward I. from receiving any more lands, rents, or possessions *in ultionem tantæ pigritiæ*; the same as by the famous STATUTE OF MORT-

MAIN, which proceeded from the above, and was intended to restrain those death-bed confessors upon the perturbed senses of the dying, from impoverishing their families. On the death of King John, who was compelled to be submissive to the holy chair, and whose vices had ever rendered him pusillanimous, and also from the temporizing weaknesses of his successor, the predecessor of the present vigorous sovereign ; who was influenced by no timidity from papal thunder, nor did he fear the terrible lightning of ecclesiastical censure, so appalling to all other men, in the period when he lived. He was in fact, desirous to be the supreme ; and he confessed obedience to none—in brief, *he felt as a king!*

JOHN OF BERKHAMPTED, succeeded the last Abbot, the *twenty-fifth* in numerical succession; who was, during his abbacy chiefly engaged in disputes and compromises, with the king, respecting the claims and privileges of the church : upon different occasions he was compelled to make large payments, but eventually he succeeded in obtaining from the sovereign a confirmation of all former grants made to his church and monastery by his royal predecessors. In the words of the historian, “The king gives at the same time an acquit-

“tance and release to the abbot and his church, of
“all debts however due to him or his successors in
“times past.” And in the patent of recompense he
“engages that the cells and their possessions shall
“be safe and inviolate, and that his escheator shall
“stay no longer than one day within the gates of
“the abbey or cell.”—This is dated in the 31st year
of his reign, *i. e.* 1301.

The king also gave a charter, in addition to these he had confirmed, called *Warrina Columbarium*, considered a great privilege; he also exempted the men of the abbot from going out of the liberty on any summons, or on any occasion to appear before any justiciary; so his seneschal had power of Oyer and Terminer, general gaol delivery or assize. He died the 15th of November, 1301, having ruled the house ten years and a half, when under sentence of excommunication for offending the archbishop; nor had he the fortune to please his brethren of the establishment.

The last abbot was succeeded by JOHN MARYNS, who had officiated as prior to the abbey for the last fourteen years, and was, numerically, the *twenty-sixth* Abbot; concerning the events of whose go-

vernment nothing of importance is recorded, his death occurred the 6th of March, 1308: he was buried near the body of the last abbot, before the high altar.

HUGO DE EVETSDEN, a native of Cambridge-shire, succeeded Maryns; Hugo ruled this Society for eighteen years, he was the *twenty-seventh* in order of succession, he was involved in numerous contentious disputes with the people of the town, respecting those natural rights and civil liberties; which when the inhabitants began to be conscious of, those privileges which man enjoyed as a rational and free agent, they refused to be longer beneath the pressure of those chains which had been permitted to be thrown over their predecessors, and forged link by link, by the clergy. But this feeling then appeared to be *generally* felt by all people; ashamed of their former supineness, they awoke, and sometimes, without decency, asserted their rights. The language they used in the claim to resumption of their deposited privileges, shocked the ears of priests and kings who held them. Hugo was twice besieged in his abbey by those people,—the disaffected; and each time, for several days, to endeavour to compel him to sign a charter, granting liberty to the

inhabitants to return their own burgesses to parliament; to grind their own corn; to regulate the assize of ale and bread by twelve men chosen from among themselves; and to answer all pleas and inquisitions before the itinerant justices by a jury of townsmen (*sine conjunctione forinsecorum*,) without the admixture of persons from a different vicinage. These claims were strenuously resisted by the abbot, but the inhabitants succeeded in obtaining the king's writ, commanding him to place all the liberties, privileges, and franchises of the town on the same establishment as was recorded in Domesday book. This was but the prelude to a more complete concession on the part of the abbot; who, at length was prevailed on to sign a deed, by which certain limits which had been previously agreed on, were constituted the boundaries of the borough; and all the tenements situate within those limits were made burgages; and the inhabitants of them, advanced to the rank of burgesses, with full power to them, their heirs and successors to return *two* representatives to parliament. The signing of this instrument was strongly opposed by the archdeacon, and the whole body of the monks;—but on the abbot representing to them the risk to which they would be exposed by offending the king; they

at length gave their consent, but not before they had entered a solemn protestation against the act.

The origin of this contest was produced by the following occasion. The townsmen had furnished themselves with hand-mills to grind corn; the abbot, like most feudal lords, was desirous to suppress them, anxious, according to the proverb, to have all the grist to his own mill. This desire of his, it is conceived, he at first pursued too eagerly, because he had prosecuted several who possessed those mills; those measures tended to retard, rather than to advance his wishes, and they generally aroused the spirit of the people to resistance. The townsmen, aspired to independence, stimulated by the example set them by the king; who, desirous to create a power to resist the influence of the clergy, and the unwarantable encroachments of the Roman See, he had resorted to those measures adopted by Edward I. in the 35th year of his reign, when *Simon de Trewyk*, and *Adam Ellestite*, were returned as the *first* burgesses for this town; and *John de Sumery*, and *Gerard de Barboc*, were, at the same time, deputed as knights of the shire of Hertford, in the parliament then held at Carlisle. The burgesses of the borough complained to the king, by peti-

tion; "that the sheriff, by procurement of the abbot, "refused to warn the burgesses of this borough, or "return their names according to his duty, that they "might do their service, to the prejudice of the "burgesses, and the danger of disinheriting them." The king answered, "the wards of his chancery "should be searched, if in the time of his progenitors burgesses used to come or not; and then they "should have justice in this matter." The result was as we have seen.

This accession to their liberties being more than they were accustomed to, so intoxicated them with success, that they seized every opportunity to abuse it,—by grossly insulting all the religious with the servants of the abbey, whenever occasion presented.

From the means to which the town resorted to obtain the deed above cited, of the abbot and monarchy, that body were misled by false promises of amendment and apparent penitence, which led to forgiveness on the part of the abbey. Although thus deceived, these prepared the way for a better understanding between the parties, and eventually obtained the previous grant from the abbey.

The abbot, besides the impolitic concession above mentioned, is accused of great waste in his time, whereby several estates were lost, sums uselessly expended, and he departed the world under a general bad impression. The beautiful, but now neglected chapel of our Lady, was built during his abbacy; he was assisted in defraying the expense by liberal gifts from *Reginaldus*, an advocate of the court of Rome, but originally of this town; likewise by *Wallis de Langley* and *Alicia*, his wife. The name of WILLIAM BOYDEN is recorded as the principal architect. The debts in which he left the abbey are partly ascribed to the expenditure necessary for this building.

The famous RICHARD DE WALLINGFORD, in numerical succession, the *twenty-eighth*;—a name that will exist as long as learning, science, and ingenuity shall be respected. He was born at the place which gave him his name; and was noticed for docility in his childhood; bereft of his parents at ten years of age; he was instructed from the benevolence of the prior of Wallingford; he was sent to Oxford, when qualified for superior instruction, where he soon attained considerable reputation for piety and learning. He had whilst he resided in Oxford, made such

amazing progress in scriptural erudition, that he was elected divinity lecturer to that learned body. After quitting the University, he was admitted a monk of St. Albans; and on the death of Hugo, was chosen to succeed him; but it is recorded that before he could get his election confirmed by the pope, he was obliged to swear on the holy gospels to pay the sum of 840 marks, on the pretended claim of arrears for the expenses of a visitation.

This abbot was a very strenuous and successful defender of the rights and claims of his church, and by his policy and good conduct, obtained from the towns-people, by voluntary resignation, a formal surrender of all the privileges they had wrested from Hugo de Evetsden, together with all their charters and written monuments of grants, confirmations, and records of every kind. The abbot, Wallingford, was a proficient in most of the liberal arts and sciences, and also an excellent mechanist. He had constructed an astronomical or philosophical clock, which he denominated ALBION, seen by *Leland*, and which he describes partly from his own inspection, and in part from a written account of the inventor himself. "*Willing*," he says, "*to give a miraculous proof of his genius, of his learning,*

*“and of his manual operations, with great labour, greater expense, and excellent art, he constructed a clock, (Horologi.) that all Europe, in my opinion, cannot shew one even second to it, whether for indicating the course of the sun and moon, or the fixed stars; whether the increase or decrease of the sea; or the lines with the figures and demonstrations, almost infinitely diversified: when he had completed this labor, truly worthy of immortality, he wrote a book, and being the first of mathematicians of his time, containing a series of canons, lest so fine a piece of mechanism should be lowered in the erroneous opinion of the monks, or should be stopped in its movements, from their ignorance of the order of its structure.”**

This great labor was what had borrowed a portion of his attention for many years. “He had begun this clock early in life, and then neglected it; but being encouraged to proceed by the king, when at the abbey on a visit, he resumed the work, and this royal exhortation made him very diligent in the execution; for he would say, though the abbey wants repairs, my successors may be able to

* *Leland de Scrip. Brit.* 404. See also *Whitaker's St. Germans*, v. 11. p. 349.

“ build walls and mend tiling, but none, I believe, excepting myself, can finish this clock.”*

Having no scientific description of this clock handed down, we can pronounce no judgment of its merits, being ignorant of the principles which actuated this complex machine, and even of the materials with which it was constructed. It was, however, a master-piece, although the *first* machine, to determine the measure of time in this kingdom; and perhaps, the earliest in Europe, or even the world, should the hour-glass and *Clepsydræ* be excepted. It is, in fact, the *first*, and almost a solitary instance, of so complex a machine being perfected by a *single* individual, and upon a first trial.† This abbot also wrote many works, of which we have only the titles, in astronomy, judicial astrology, geometry, philosophy, and the mathematics.

MICHAEL DE MENTMORR, the *twenty-ninth* in succession, who was most remarkable on account of the meekness, kindness, and benevolence of his nature; insomuch that he was regarded by his bre-

* Newcome, vol. 1. page 259.

† See Williams's History of Inventions and Discoveries; articles *Clepsydræ*, *Clocks*, and *Watches*.

thren of the abbey, and his coteremporaries, they called him AN ANGEL.* This term, among monks, expresseth much; inasmuch as they conceived it a comprehensive appellation, designative of all those virtues to be found in a superior nature only: and considering the jealousy which constantly pervaded the inhabitants of a cloister, it is the more to be admired, that the chief object of their envy, should have so conducted himself, as to have insured so general a good report. That he was pious we may infer, when we are informed of the necessary repairs he made in the church, and of his attention to its service; i. e. repairing and reinstating the south part of the transept, the roof of which had with part of the wall, been rotted by the wet, and fallen during the time of Hugo de Evetsden. He was esteemed equally by his prince, the nobility, and people; for, in his time, the queen, *Philippa*, being delivered of a son at Langley, his reputation was so eminent among the nobles and courtiers, that they thought his hands would convey with the blessing a peculiar degree of sanctity and merit. He baptized the child by the name of *Edmund de Langley*; the earls, John de Warren, and Richard de Arundell, were the sponsors. The queen, in due

* As *Weever*, in his *Funeral Monuments*, p. 561, bears testimony.

time, came to the abbey, and made an offering of a gold cloth of great value.

In the year 1349, a dreadful pestilential disorder had appeared in this country, which had ravaged all this part of the world; the abbot first felt the effects of that gale which brought death upon its wings, and every where spread its baneful influence, leaving the seeds of premature mortality. On Maunday-Thursday, when Michael had been doing the duties of the choir in person,—on this day the service was long, being the solemnity of the great mass, attended with the washing of feet of the poor. This token of the most humiliating labor of love, the abbot had performed; retiring to rest, he complained of pain and sickness: this confined him to his bed, and its malignity increasing, finished his life on the tenth day, when he was called from this uncertain state of being, to receive the reward of good actions. The abbot of Waltham performed his obsequies on Thursday in Easter week. This pestilence was very mortal; for besides those monks who died in the cells, the number who died *here*, amounted to *forty-seven*, among whom were many of the most pious and holy men of the house. Walsingham says, “There never appeared a man of greater humility,

"justice, and integrity, and as was said of *Moses*, "none so mild and gentle:" he adds, "and his death "would have been greatly lamented, had he left "brethren behind him; and the loss, *indeed* irrep-
"rable, had not such a man as *Thomas de la Mare*
"succeeded."

THOMAS DE LA MARE, the *thirtieth* Abbot in suc-
cession; was descended from most respectable pa-
rents, and connected by blood with many of the first
families in the kingdom. His father was Sir John
de la Mare, knight; and his mother, Joanna, daughter
of Sir John de Herpsfield, knight. Our abbot had
been educated in the Cell at Wymondham, in which
he was distinguished for his proficiency in rhetoric.
He was afterwards prior of Tinmouth, and eventu-
ally elected to fill the supreme chair of this society,
upon the death of the last abbot. Previous to which
elevation to the priory, he had, to the entire satisfac-
tion of the abbot and whole convent, filled the most
important and trusty offices in the monastery. Upon
his Cell at Tinmouth, he had made many important
repairs and improvements. The same fatality which
deprived the world of the last abbot, had also car-
ried off the prior and sub-prior of the monastery.
During his episcopacy he is recorded to have spent

4000*l.* in some repairs, and adorning the church; but it would seem probable, the re-building of the gate to the abbey, which had been blown down in a great wind, should be included in this sum; he also re-built a house for the copyists and entirely new-paved the western part of the church.

He was commissioned by his sovereign (Edward I.) to visit all the monastic institutions in the kingdom, and was assured of the assistance of the civil power, in effecting a much-wanted reform. He was directed to admonish, reprove, correct, and if he found it necessary, to remove any abbot, prior, or principal, whom he found not conducting their societies according to the strict orders of the institution, who were vicious themselves, or permitted the brotherhood to offend in religious observances and the strict discipline of the convent. He accordingly visited Eynham, *Abyndon*, (Abingdon) Beaulieu, *Radyngia*, or Reading, Chester, and *St. Edmund de Bury*; in some of which, *i. e.* the three first, he made considerable reform. In Reading, he discovered the greatest disorders; as conspiracies among the monks against the abbot, some of the conspirators he caused to be sent to different Cells, whilst others he transplanted to his own monastery, where they were com-

pelled to strict penance, or to undergo some punishment till penance was manifested. At Chester he deposed the abbot, who had allowed and cherished great faults, and had suffered the buildings to go to decay; he assigned him a competent maintenance out of a farm, but supplied his place in the abbey by one, who better knew his duty. He was also a strict disciplinarian in his own abbey, insomuch so, that many of the monks, as if unable to endure the rigour of the order, and strictness of the discipline, privately withdrew themselves. At length he conceived an intention to resign his abbacy; he had at this time in his abbey, *John*, king of France, taken a prisoner previously at the battle of *Poitiers*, anno 1356. This prince, the abbot entertained at his table, and to him he communicated his intention of resigning,—his royal guest applauded his resolution, and the prince promised to write with his own hand to the pope, to obtain his leave. Three men of the town of St. Albans, (shortly after the ransom of the French king had been paid, and he was returned home,) were travelling to Rome, through France, they were taken up and cast into prison; they wrote to the abbot, who interceded with the prince of Wales in the favor of those men, whose letter from the English king to the king of France,

he dispatched, accompanied by one from himself to the French monarch, who instantly ordered the men to be liberated, with this remark :—" Why doth my brother prince think it necessary to intercede for these prisoners, when a word only from such a man as abbot Thomas, would have been sufficient."

Soon afterwards our abbot wrote his letter of supplication to the pope, which he sent to his friend Richard de Eccleshall, at Calais, at which place were assembled the king of France, prince Edward, and several English nobles, to conclude on the treaty of peace between the realms. The treasurer was requested to deliver the letter to the king; but the prince enquiring into the cause, and being informed of the business, forbad any further proceedings therein;—" *for such a man as the abbot could not be spared.*"

The abbot suffered much from the refractory spirit of the times, produced by the commotions of Watt Tyler and Jack Straw; but before his death all losses the abbey had thereby sustained, were remedied by the friendly disposition of government to the present abbot. His constitution withstood a second pestilential attack; he lived to the age of 88, and died

on the 1st of September, 1396. The love and veneration which his amiable manners had procured through life, was manifested at his death by every description of people: no man could die more generally or more sincerely lamented. His body was buried, habited in his richest vestments, as appears then to have been the custom with these dignitaries. The historian, *Walsingham*, describes it, as if present on the occasion, and as if he was also a witness of his death.

De la Mare was succeeded by JOHN DE LA MOOTE, the *thirty-first* Abbot, in numerical succession. He obtained several new privileges for his monastery from the court of Rome; he constructed a new chamber for the abbot, at an expense of more than 600 marks, rebuilt part of the cloisters, and increased the monastic buildings by other additions of various buildings on the abbey estates, that were constructed in his prelacy. The mansion at Tittenhanger, the retreat of the abbots, was begun by him, though not completed till the time of John of Wheathampstead. In this house De la Moote was seized with a pleurisy; being removed to his abbey, he died on St. Martin's day, 1400. In De la Moote's time, the question which had long since been previously settled, about

precedency, between the abbot of St. Albans and the abbot of Westminster, was again agitated with much contention on the part of the Westminster abbot, who seized upon one occasion the seat of St. Alban's abbot in parliament by force, before the king and his nobles : however, William Heyworth, who was Moote's successor, from a consciousness of superior learning, and a desire to promote the peace and order necessary in such assemblies, forbore to insist on his proper prerogative.

WILLIAM HEYWORTH succeeded the last abbot, being the *thirty-second*; he governed the society with much prudence for twenty-one years, *i. e.* till 1421, when he resigned his office, being advanced to the see of Litchfield.

It was in the prelacy of Heyworth, and of his two predecessors, that the doctrines of Wickliffe, one of the precursors of reformation in the religious opinions of Rome, took place in this country; Wickliffe had originally been educated in the doctrines of the church, and had held the office of prior in Canterbury college, in the university of Oxford; in which college, pupils were instructed in the superior branches of learning brought from Greece and

Rome, with that information in the sciences which the two last orders of friars had imported into this country, and which has been observed to have formed a superior species of learning to that hitherto taught in the cloister. Wickliffe was also a divinity lecturer in that university : from *his* principles, which were similar to those of Martin Luther, arose the sect afterwards known by the name of *Lollards*, which name was given them first in that university as a term of reproach. Various were the heads of this faction raised in this country, upon those principles, from the circumstance of his having, in demonstrating the errors of the established religion, inveighed against the practices in the State. The great friend of Wickliffe, who appears to have been considered as the champion of his faction, was the famous *John Duke of Lancaster*. There were also others of less note, as Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, and even those rabble leaders, Watt Tyler, and Jack Straw, sheltered themselves behind his doctrines. Wickliffe, however, had made many rational converts to religious opinions in England, as well as in Germany, Bohemia, and other countries in the north of Europe, from the occasion of his having scholars from those places in the university. About 1371, Wickliffe was removed from his bene-

fice in the university, in consequence of a bull from the pope, who feared for his supremacy, by Islip, the archbishop; his writings and opinions subsequently condemned, and many of his converts suffered martyrdom, among whom was Sir John Oldcastle; but he, Wickliffe himself, still retained the living of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he died in peace, after suffering various persecutions. We regret that we are precluded giving a circumstantial and detailed account of the life of this great man, and an intelligible history of the Reformation: this notice may *here*, perhaps, suffice; and we rest with more confidence, because the history of this country, with that of the English church, will supply our omission;—and to which our readers are respectfully referred.

Notwithstanding our limited circumstances, we should not believe ourselves excusable, were we to omit noticing the foundation of a religious order, new to this country, which came from *Provence*, in the south of France, and which was stationed near to this local spot, at *Berkhampsted*, and about this period of time, by Edmund Duke of Cornwall. This society was called in their own country *Le Bon Homines*, or the dialect of the vulgar Gascons, *Les Bos Homes*;

but here they were known by the name of their local situation, *Le Bone Homines de ASHRUDGGE*, or, *the good men of ASHRIDGE*; and were established here in 1283, 11th of Edw. I. It is conjectured, that they were brought into this country either from the wish of some of the Provincials themselves; or else, that they were established by the pious mother of that prince, the Duke of Lancaster, and that they were stationed near to his dwelling, that being at Berkhamsted, where he had those *good brothers* to officiate as chaplains. The motive which might justify their establishment here, arose doubly, from their singular piety, and good name; their religious opinions are said to have been near akin to those of the Albigenses: by some they have been conceived to have been the same; some have thought them inclinable to Manichæism; but *Mosheim* says, they were, in truth, a remnant of the ancient *Paulicians*.* Both orders having the utmost derision among the former-established orders of the monks and friars, as history reports; and those were also beheld under a similar stigma by the new order, which report has confirmation from the caricature resemblance of those orders, which, we are informed, is still discoverable in their cloister at Berk-

* Ecclesiastical History of the 11th Century.

Hampstead. This college was endowed by the duke for the maintenance of 20 brothers, clerks, of whom 19 at least, were to be priests, with the following endowments;—his manor of Asseridge, with Pithelesstone, and all other its appurtenances; also, the manors of Little Gaddesden, with that of Hemelhamstead, except the advowson of the church, with all privileges and immunities belonging to the said manors. He also allowed them common pasture in his wood at Berkhamsted, called *Le Fryth*. The Earl of Cornwall, by another deed gave also to these brothers the manors of Cestreton, now known as Chesterton, a vicarage, now belonging to New College; and of Ambrosden, with the advowson of the churches of the same.*

All these grants and donations, and all the privileges annexed to the above manors, are confirmed by a charter of Edward I. in the 14th year of his reign. There was only one more endowment for these *Bonnes Hommes* in England; i. e. Edington, in Wilts, by William de Edington, bishop of Winton, in 1352, who was Lord Treasurer and prime minister to Edward III.

* Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. 1.

The next Abbot in succession, the *thirty-third*, a man, whom the annals of this house had never yet produced one more illustrious, was JOHN OF WHEATHAMPSTEAD, descended of a family of the name of Bostock. He was trained up at Gloucester College, Oxford, of which establishment, he was the prior. In addition to what has been previously noticed of this University foundation, we should here observe, that to it were sent from all the principal Benedictine houses in England, and especially from St. Albans, young monks, there to be instructed in such reputable learning, as was not taught in their respective monasteries. Abbot John, after his election to the prelacy, very early directed his attention to the state of the abbey church, and by his influence with the great, he procured very large sums towards putting it into repair, and furnishing it with additional ornaments. The nave of the church was new ceiled and painted, the choir was repaired, and a neat chapel erected in it, for the abbot's burial place; the chapel of the virgin was also fresh painted, and further embellished; the cloisters were new glazed, with painted and stained glass, representing a series of subjects from scripture history; and other offices of the monastery were either substantially repaired, or rebuilt. The beautiful monument of

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, was also constructed during this abbacy; and from corresponding workmanship in the very elegant screen which separates the chancel from the presbytery; and from the circumstance of his arms ornamenting the door-ways therein, we infer that this must be considered of his erection. The limitations enacted by the statute of mortmain had prevented this church, in common with others, from benefiting so much from the gifts of charity, ostentation, or the repentant, as it would have done, previous to the existence of that statute. The desire of the ecclesiastics to increase their possessions, was not, however, less ardent; and numerous devices were resorted unto, to prevent the penalties of that law being enforced on estates which the church had acquired by device or gift since its operation. Conscious that this abbey was in that situation, fearing its consequences, and being also apprehensive of its losing what it had obtained, to screen himself and the property so acquired,—this abbot procured from the crown and parliament, confirmations and renewed grants, with assurances of the property, pardons and indemnifications, from the pains and penalties of that statute. This gave occasion to a grand instrument, as remarkable for its phraseology; as, that it includes indemnities for

many of the vilest crimes which can debase human nature: offences, too, of which the good abbot never could have thought, it is presumed, whilst conscious of being. The pardons bear date the twentieth of Henry VI. and runs thus:—"We have pardoned
 "unto the said John, abbot of St. Albans, the suit
 "of our pence, which belongs unto us, against him,
 "for all murders, rapes, rebellions, insurrections,
 "felonies, conspiracies, and other transgressions,
 "extortions, misprisions, ignorances, contempts,
 "concealments, and deceptions, by him in anywise
 "perpetrated, before the 2nd of September, in the
 "twentieth year of our reign; also, any outlavery
 "that shall have been published against him on these
 "occasions. Provided nevertheless, the said abbot
 "appear not to be conversant in the mystery of
 "coining, nor a clipper of our money, nor a common
 "approver, nor a notorious thief, nor a felon, who
 "had abjured the realm; but is that he stand *veritas*
 "in *curia nostra*, if any one should question him
 "on the premises."*

Shortly afterwards, in A. D. 1440, apprehending the troubles which would befall the State, and which particularly oppressed his best and dearest friend,

* Newcome's St. Albans, part ii. p. 335.

he resigned in the presence of a certain clerk, named Matthew Bepset, and other officers of the house, dated 26th of November, 1440, having held the episcopal chair twenty years; in which period he had completely repaired the church, made many new buildings, new-ceiled the church, which he painted, restored the pavement, and completely renovated the funeral monuments. The church, monastery, and the estates had felt the benefit of this prudent abbot's jurisdiction, he having spent in repairs and alterations, during his prelacy, the sum of £2,622 with management, and made many new and discreet regulations.

The next Abbot, who in numerical succession was the *thirty-fourth*, was JOHN STOKER; this election was made from the cell of Wallingford, and was supposed to have been directed by the prudence of the last abbot, on account of his negative qualities;—but he, the late abbot, seeing the troublesome spirit which would pervade those times, from his knowledge of what had occurred in antecedent periods, judged that a passive character was better suited to succeed under such circumstances, than one where energy, intellect, and even experience, were united. Such a character as this, was John Stoke, of whom

historians have been either silent, or else what they may have written, has never reached our times. However, there is one circumstance, which renders this period interesting to the nation in general, and to this church in particular;—that to which we allude, is the death of the pious, wise, and virtuous prince, Humphrey Plantagenet, duke of Gloucester, the uncle of, and friend to the king, and also a friend to the people; the upright counsellor and courageous patriot: he had been the protector of the young sovereign, and the best friend to the true interests of the nation; in this character, independent of his being the uncle also, he of course possessed great influence with the king and his council; he was likewise the very particular friend of the last abbot, and through his influence it is conceived the abbey had obtained many of its privileges, and much property. The interest of the duke of Gloucester, however, declined at court, as the annals of 1440 will prove; when it appears the unnatural enmity of the cardinal bishop was able to prevail against him in the king's council, and he procured the release of the duke of Orleans, (as before stated,) against the advice and remonstrance of duke Humphrey. In proportion as the duke's interest declined, that of the bishop advanced with the king and council; insomuch that the council

was filled with the creatures of the latter. There was introduced William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, at the recommendation of the bishop ; this man secretly negotiated the marriage of the king with *Margaret of Anjou*, the daughter of a mere titular prince, without territory, court, or influence ; but one condition of the match was, that Henry should yield to the French king the whole of the country of Maine, which had ever been considered as a barrier of security to Normandy. Gloucester opposed this ignominious alliance ; but to no purpose, for the cardinal and council carried the same into effect, and the young queen came over in 1445. This addition to the cardinal's interest enabled him and Suffolk to determine to get rid of the duke ; and in the year 1447, he was charged with high treason, in conspiring the king's death, in order to seize the crown ; but instead of a trial, he was found, after a few days, dead in his bed. This happened at St. Edmundsbury, where the court choosed to assemble, as in a more private place than at London. The nation demurred ; but the power of the great defied the complaints and the natural sense of justice in man. However Providence seems to have avenged his death, in that utter ruin which fell on the king, queen, and all the nobility. He, Gloucester, being

dead, the people cast their eye upon the duke of York, as the next legitimate heir, and asserted his right; this raised up a terrible enemy, with a most destructive civil war.* The duke was buried at *St. Albans*, as British history will evince that general fact, whilst this is corroborated by particular charges of the funeral, masses, &c. recorded in the *Cottonian MSS.* marked Claud. VIII. in the library of the British Museum, formerly collected from the archives of this monastery and church. The expense of his tomb, grave, &c. was £434. 6s. 8d.; annual expenditure, £142. 13s. 4d.

The abbey is said to have suffered many losses during the time of Stoke, as well from negligent conduct on the part of the abbot and his officers, as also from several fraudulent transactions of those officers themselves.—The abbot ruled the monastery for about seventeen years, when he died, in 1451, and was buried in an honorable manner, in the presbytery.

JOHN OF WHEATHAMPSTEAD was re-elected to the honorable office, being the *thirty-fifth* Abbacy in successive order. He, upon his re-election, continued

* Newcome, part ii. p. 340, 341.

to govern the establishment with the most exemplary discretion till the year 1462, when he experienced the common fate of man. This venerable abbot and most worthy man, was surrounded by the bitter conflicts which ever distinguish so unnatural and bloody a contest as an internal war,—when nature's ties and kindred rights are all forgotten;—when father slew the son, and son the sire;—when brother thirsted for his brother's blood!—And now, when the asperity of momentary feeling is subsided, (as all terrestrial conflicts will subside,) the prevailing sentiments of wonder, with astonishment at human folly, is the most general feeling: and we enquire, what demoniac principle could have commixed itself with our nature to make us forget our best, our dearest, most natural affections?—The result will supply an answer—when we see that they are not our own quarrels we have embraced; but that we have been urged on by the minion of some party, been the dupes of momentary feeling, or suffer from the popular frenzy of some demagogue. So sanguine, so bitter a contest, remarkable for being the most deeply-shaded *æra* that ever disgraced the annals of this or any other kingdom, with the prodigal effusion of human blood, happened in the period we now contemplate.—The contest between the houses of

York and Lancaster. In those eventful days did our most worthy abbot pursue an upright course in his conduct,—that he appears to have verified the scriptural text, “ *That wisdom is justified of her children!* ”

It may suffice to say, that this discreet, this worthy dignitary was permitted to rule his brethren with impartiality and justice, in quiet and comparative repose for the course of eleven years more. From the respect our abbot procured from both parties by the propriety of his conduct, himself or abbey never suffered any injury from either of those parties, who respected no right, nor preserved no interest, however sacred.

Upon the first battle of St. Albans, numerous of the slain lay thick in the upper (St. Peter's) street, and at the division of the ways about the market. Among them were seen the bodies of Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset; of Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; Thomas Clifford, Lord Clifford, and others of great note: but because they were persons well known to be hateful to the duke of York, when alive, none ventured to prepare for their funerals, or shewed any decent regard to their bodies.

On which, abbot John addressed the duke, and begged him to spare the vanquished, and suffer some honors to be paid to these deceased;—"not *"enemies will I call them,"* says he, "*but your relations in blood, and fellow-patriots :*" and saying more to recommend moderation in victory, the duke commanded him to take the bodies and provide for the funerals. Thus those heroes were interred with honors suitable to their rank by his pious intercession, and mostly buried in the chapel of the Virgin.*

In the reign of Edward IV. and just before his (the abbot's) death, this abbot preferred a petition to the king, complaining of the losses the monastery had suffered in the civil commotions, and requesting relief; upon which, the king, in addition to a confirmation of former grants by his predecessors, allowed the abbey an honorary augmentation of the abbot's civil power, for the liberty of St. Albans, Watford, and the whole hundred of Cashio, of palatinate jurisdiction, similar to those then enjoyed by the Sees of Ely and Durham, and still in existence in those places. This grant is dated at Westminster, November 3d, 1461.

* Of the two battles which took place on this spot, the reader will find an account in the second part.

VERULAM AND ST. ALBANS.

It should be observed, that in the prelacy of this abbot, Edward, earl of March, then aged 29, after having defeated the forces of the king and queen in the second battle of St. Albans, went to London, declared his title to the throne, seized it by force, being supported by his victorious army, and the popular voice, which always follows victory; he was soon crowned by the name of Edward IV. The abbot was informed that a resumption was made by parliament of his priory of Pembroke, with its lands, part of the donations of the late duke Humphrey: on which a bill was directed to be presented to parliament to preserve this estate, which was done by the kind intervention of the bishop of Exeter, his chancellor, and letters patent issued, confirming the parliamentary grant, dated 23d of December, in the first year of his reign. This was the leading feature of the public state of affairs, and their local complexion, as far as regards the abbey.

The succeeding Abbot, the *thirty-sixth* in numerical succession, was WILLIAM ALBAN, who took the supremacy, but of whom no particulars of interest are recorded, but that he was elected, which election was confirmed by *licence*, granted 23rd of January, in the fourth year of this king's reign, when

he also consented to a resumption of temporalities. It is added, however, "Alban was chosen, and he acted in all the functions of an abbot, without any scruple; nor did the new abbot go to court to swear fealty and allegiance." It is conjectured, and it seems probable, that the distracted state of the crown might produce these omissions on the part of Edward, who was now at the head of armies, and fighting to secure a throne which the parliament had just voted to him, and the abbot did not chuse to hasten in proof of his loyalty while *Henry* was yet alive, and no lawful sovereign, as yet generally acknowledged." Independent of this, there appears nothing of interest, as has been said with regard to the structure of the church, or any other thing, to us, of consequence; only that he died the 1st of July, 1476.

WILLIAM WALLINGFORD, the *thirty-seventh* Abbot in succession, was chosen to the prelacy on the 4th of August, 1476, (sixteenth year of Edward IV.) who had been prior of the abbey. In his time the beautiful screen at the high altar was finished, at the expense of 1100 marks. But the most important event which occurred under his rule at the monastery, if this be denied, at least, we can, without

fear of contradiction, assert, that the most important event to the interests of civil and religious mankind, that has occurred at any season, had existence now; we allude to the wonderful art of PRINTING, of which we are enabled to furnish the following interesting particulars:—

In the reign of Henry VI. *Cardinal Thomas Bouchier*, archbishop of Canterbury, sent *R. Turnour*, master of the robes, and *W. Caxton*, merchant, to Harleim, to learn the art. These persons privately prevailed upon one *Corsells*, an underworkman, to come to England; and a press was established at Oxford.—(*MSS. Chron. in Lambeth Palace*, cited by *Atkyns* in his “Origin and Growth of Printing in England,” 1664.)—which chronicle also informs us, that the execution of this concern was entrusted to Turnour and Caxton, and cost 1500 marks; that Printing was established at Oxford, before there were any printing presses in France, Italy, Spain, or Germany, except the city of Mentz, which is said to claim seniority over Harleim itself, styling herself “*Urbem magnatınam artis typographicę inventarium primum.*”

“The University press being discovered to be too

“remote from the seat of government, and too great
 “a distance from the sea, other presses were soon
 “established at ST. ALBANS, and the abbey of
 “Westminster.”*—The following books are said to
 have been first printed *here*,—by concurring authorities:—

1. *Rhetorica nova Fratis Laur. Gal. de Saona Ord. Minorum*, 1400—a small quarto, and was in Dr. Meade’s collection; now in *Musæ. Brit.*

2. *Alberti Liber modorum significandi*, 1480.

3. *Incipiunt exempla Sacra Scriptura*, 1480.

4. *In Aristotolis Physica*, 1481.

5. *The St. Alban’s Chronicle*, compiled also at this place, 1483.

Some of these latter, namely, what related to English affairs, had been printed by Caxton, in the year 1480, and then called *The Chronicle of England*; but now much foreign history and scripture was interwoven with it, collected, it is presumed, from *Fascialus Temporum*, printed in 1481, and named *Fructus Temporum*. This Chronicle was printed again in 1497, by *Wynken de Worde*, at

* See Williams’s *History of Inventions and Discoveries*, vol. ii, p. 112, 113; et *Typ. Antiq. cum MSS. Archiepiscop. before cited.*

Westminster; and he says in his title, "It was composed in a booke and also empynted by one, sometime scole-mayster at St. Albons."—In the Register of Wallingford's Acts and Deeds no notice is taken of this new and very curious art; nor of the eminent authoress who appeared only a few years after, *i. e.* 1486, within the walls of their own foundation, and so near, that her ability must have had their notice; and who was *Lady Juliana Barnes*, or more properly *Berners*, who was the daughter of Sir James Berners, of Berners Riding, in Essex, knight, and sister of Richard Lord Berners,* which Lady Juliana had composed a book, entitled *The Gentleman's Recreation*, containing three treatises, one on hunting, another on hunting and fishing, and a third on Coots Armouris. Her name is affixed to the end of the second only. Sir H. Chauncey calls the printer, John Insomuch; but the whole was printed by Herford, in anno 1486. This art appears to have been dropped by Herford: the monks and priests gave no encouragement to printing, as the silence of the Wallingford Register unites in informing us;—but were this wanting, we have verbal tes-

* *Note.* In cent. 8. fo. 611, says, this Lady Juliana became prioress of Sopwell; the evidence of which appears to rest on a letter to Thomas Hearne, dated December 16, 1733, by Mr. Barton.

timony from the mouth of a chief of their function, when it appears that it is recorded of Cardinal Wolsey, that he, in his early days, declared at a convocation held at St. Paul's, that "if they did not *forbid* printing, it would prove the *ruin* of the "church."* Such facts speak volumes,—and proclaim to us the extreme pertinacity with which the members of the church were desirous to hold all intelligence from the people: that those *churlish priests* might hold the extinguisher over the celestial orb of intelligence, or they might *screen* it to enjoy its whole favours themselves, and to the total exclusion of all participation by the laity, by totally annihilating or eclipsing it, when they were so disposed.

After this time, there was here, as also at Oxford and Cambridge, a long intermission in the art of printing. Herford, at length, settled in Aldersgate Street, London, where he printed in 1536, and some years after. In 1534, he had at the request of Cotton, printed '*The Lyfe and Passion of St. Alban,*' as then translated from the French and Latin, by John Lydgate, the monk of Bury.

It may be remarked, not that we think it *material*,

* Newcome's History of St. Albans, part ii. p. 394.

but it has been noticed by others, that during the times of the three last abbots, Henry the VIth, and Edward the IVth, were frequently entertained at St. Albans ;—but after their deaths, it lost the cheering influence of sovereign favor ; although it is confessed, that in the short reign of Richard the III. this abbey received some slight indications of royal favor ; his kindness being directed by the influence of selfish feeling, as was his successor's, though of a different character ;—it cannot be supposed that either monarch would sacrifice their time or wealth, when their favorite pursuits could not be answered. Henry VII. it cannot be doubted for an instant, did not records inform us, kept the temporalities in his own hand, till 1492 ; his prevailing passion, being notoriously known, to be distinguished by *avarice*, even to meanness ; whilst his predecessor's chief failing was influenced by inordinate *ambition*, to accomplish those objects, he suffered no ties, however sacred, to stand between him and the object of his passion. Yet neither Gloucester nor Richmond were without virtues ; although, alas ! the amiable and most commendable traits in their dissimilar habits, were too strongly tinged by their most prevalent feelings. This abbot, we are informed, had been very prudent in the management of the revenues of the church,

having made some addition by purchase, and strenuously defended the abbatical rights against archbishop Bourchier's desires for innovation, who had harassed and oppressed him (the abbot,) by divers suits at law; however, the papal court determined in the abbot's favor. He was also very munificent to this church, as it has been asserted that he built a stately front to the great altar, which cost 1100 marks. He likewise built a small chapel, with a tomb, having his effigy in marble, on the south side of the great altar, which cost £100. He died the 8th of August, 1484. His tomb is now destroyed.

However, at length, Henry VII. permitted the succeeding abbot, THOMAS RAMRIDGE, or RAMRUGGE, usually though corruptly spelled *Ramridge*, to occupy the episcopal chair,—being in order of succession the *thirty-eighth*, who was elected in 1492. How long he continued in office is uncertain, (if a rental of lands and tenements purchased by him in anno 1507, be excepted;) although Newcome imagines it was till 1523. that he survived, that being the period when we believe Wolsey resigned his bishopric of Lincoln, and held this abbey *in commendam*. However, be it long or short, it appears extremely uncertain, whether this abbatical dignity

of Ramridge was any thing more than merely *titular*; for Henry VII. having once been permitted to taste of saved wealth, which he first is presumed to have done on the attainder of the seneschal to this abbey, Catesby, Richard's former favorite, he found the flavour so inviting, that he never forgot the relish. This parsimonious sovereign, discovered two lawyers, Empsom, and Dudley, who just meeting his views with regard to the plunder of the laity; and who, when they had exhausted every plausible pretence for a regal extortion, that penal laws would permit,—had recourse to the boundless region of their own imagination, to invent crimes, and lay charges against the people, from whence they must extricate themselves by *money*. Morton, archbishop of Canterbury, and Fox, another clerical dignitary, had been faithful servants to the king, whom he had rewarded; and they, from gratitude, of course, thought it their *duty* still to execute his plans, and to coincide with his views, in a manner, it is added, that could be justified by no man, even in the lowest, and most indigent. Thus were Morton and Fox as useful and successful in fleecing the clergy, as were Empsom and Dudley in stripping the laity. The duplicity of this mean wretch, whose habits are so abhorrent to a regal feeling, was never more strongly marked,

than it was with regard to bishops and their sees; he would keep them vacant for two or three years, or else appoint a bishop, then remove him; by those changes he seemed to be advancing his friends, (at their own expense,) but he never restored the temporalities, till he could remove the bishop no farther.

Monastic institutions had experienced their best days;—the zenith of their orbit had been seen in the time of Richard III.; their perfection then, to the views of the founders, had attained to consummation:—keeping strict rules of religion, relieving more people at their gates than were fed in the refectory, all the helpless and young children provided for, and the infirm supported; they were also most useful in clearing barren heaths, draining marshes, undertaking works of a large kind, which few private fortunes could accomplish;—thus we behold them very serviceable to agriculture, and the general interests of society. From the probity of the priors, (which was proverbial,) antecedent to mercantile establishments,—those heads were regarded as most worthy of trust; when property could not be safely confided to other hands, the heads of monasteries were considered as a good—nay, the best security. In brief, these houses served in

all the separate and distinct purposes, which are now performed by churches;—offices for the relief of the poor, hospitals for the cure of the sick, schools, inns, and alms-houses. When we see all those excellent institutions supplied by monastic establishments, taking the comforts and convenience of our species into consideration, we cannot forbear, in respect to remembrance, uniting in sentiment with the elegant Dr. Brooker,—

“ Restore, O piety of modern times !
“ Restore them to their pride : what ancient zeal,
“ The generous zeal of better days, bestow'd,
“ At least preserve, and let not ruin's tooth
“ Insatiate prey on pearls.”

It is observed, that there is now no record of any of the transactions of this abbot, (Ramridge,) and nothing records his name, but a sumptuous monument in stone-work, and a flat stone, inlaid with brass, representing his portraiture : the probable time of his death is before spoken of. He left the world with a good character.

THOMAS WOLSEY, the *thirty-ninth* Abbot, in progressive succession, a native of Ipswich, in Suffolk, of mean parentage, was very industrious and diligent at school ; removed early to Oxford, where he took, at the age of 15, the degree of A. B.

His first living was the benefice of Limington ; he early attained the favor of the crown : was chaplain to King Henry VII. filled numerous important offices in the State ;—in the church, he was dean of Lincoln, the best deanery in England at that period. In the reign of Henry VIII. he was made a privy counsellor, Lord Chancellor, bishop of Turney or Tournay in France, afterwards promoted to the see of Lincoln, and Winton, progressively ; subsequently was made archbishop of York. He next received, without royal licence,—from his holiness, a cardinal's hat, with legative authority, from the See of Rome. He was next made, from the same source, general overseer (apparently a new office,) of *this monastery*, anno 1524. He was, by *his own* appointment, made ABBOT of *this monastery*, the 31st of November, 1536 : 17 *regni sui* ; which office he held, contrary to all former precedent, *in commendam*.

This mode of holding the dignified station of lord abbot, in one of the most important monasteries in the realm,—was considered so enormous a breach of the canon law, that it amazed all sober-minded and religious persons, who held the honor of God, and the prosperity and dignity of the country at heart ;—

it was considered so great an innovation of all established rights, that they thought it portended some fatal blow to the religious establishments of the country; and although this power of holding, was at first revocable by the supreme head, but, as it never had been practised, with regard to this abbey and conventual institutions, because their care required the constant personal attendance of the dignitary; whereas, in secular concerns, such was not thought so indispensable.

Wolsey being legate, or the supreme head in England, required no leave for making *his own appointment*; nor did he fear being questioned for this step. It doth not appear he ever came down *even* to take possession; indeed, there is no record to shew what was done during his *commendation*, which lasted till his downfall; nor who was his prior, or what material events then affected the house. But it may be conjectured that he took its revenues, in order to assist in building and founding his new college at Oxford. In 1525, he had finished the palace of Hampton Court, and presented it to the king, next meditating as splendid a structure for science and learning, as he had already prepared for royalty; to aid this purpose, he had obtained leave

from the pope and king, for the suppression of eighteen small monasteries in 1526;—in 1529, he procured a grant for dissolving the priory of *Wallingford*, and the hospital of *St. Free*, both dependent on our monastery, on condition of applying the revenue to the use of his new college.

The abbey continued in Woolsey's hands, at the time of his founding his two colleges at Oxford and Ipswich; of which, that at Oxford is said to have had its foundations only laid, and the hall and kitchen built, at the time when the founder was convicted on the Statute of *Premiure*, October 18th, 1529; whereby his goods of every kind, with all his estates, became forfeited to the king.

It has been thought the abbey, with all its real and personal property, should then have reverted to its true and original owners, according to the pious intention of the donors—the priors and monks; in legal and successive possession of the house; but, it appears, the king, when he granted a pardon to Wolsey, in the Spring of 1530, permitted him to keep the archbishopric of York, with the estates and dependencies, and also the *titles* of bishop of Winton, and abbot of St. Albans; but reserved to himself the

revenues of those two last preferments.—On the death of Wolsey, November 29, 1530, the abbey, ought then at least, to have returned to its freedom; but Henry still grasped it close, and retained the whole, causing the next-named abbot to be elected in the stead, and it is presumed, upon the *same* terms which the cardinal had held it. Wolsey died on St. Andrew's eve, at Leicester, anno 1530, the 21st of Henry VIII. in his passage from York to London, and was buried in the great church there. Holkingshed describes him “as being of great stomach, “counted himself equal with princes, obtained vast “treasure by crafty suggestion, favored little on “simony, was not pitiful; conceited in his own opinion,—would say in public what was false,—was “double in speech and meaning, would promise “much, and perform little; was an ill pastor to his “clergy, and sorely hated; and he feared the city “of London.”

The prosecution of this eminent man, his gorgeous retinue, his princely establishments, and all other his acts and deeds, as well tending to dishonor, as to his glory; will be found in the chronicles and histories of the British nation, wherein, they form a principal feature.

ROBERT CATTON was the *fortieth* Abbot in succession, it is presumed; that he succeeded to this nominal abbacy immediately upon the death of Wolsey, for history is silent: and it is also conceived, that he was inducted thereto *pro-forma*; for Henry did not wish to banish every semblance of religion, although it is thought he had very little of it at heart. In this abbacy,—it is observed, the king ruled all its concerns by secret ministers, there being retained in the house a set of people, denominated *Idle Gentlemen*; but in truth, their sole business was to observe all transactions in the abbey, therefore, they should be properly called SPIES. This abbot is said to have continued in his office till 1538, and in the December of that year, *Legh* and *Petre*, two of the commissioners appointed to visit the abbey, transmitted a letter to Lord Cromwell, in which it appears, that in 1535, the case of the monks was considered. After some person had gone so far as to suggest a total suppression of them, a great debate ensued, wherein the duke of Norfolk, Gardiner, and Langland, though they had, with reluctance, consented to extirpate the papal power, they refused their consent to this step; saying it would extirpate all religion, and open the doors to every kind of heresy; thinking that it was in monasteries alone, and not

among the seculars, where was to be found all ancient learning, all true devotion, and all right worship. From the arguments used on both sides with zeal, the king perceived that to abolish this class of men all at once, would be very ungrateful to his subjects, and offensive to those three great men present; he affected submission to their opinion, but resolved to execute this work gently and gradually.

The first step he thought most necessary was to ruin the character of these places, and by diminishing respect, he should disarm their defenders. In pursuit of this intention, and in consequence of his new headship of the church, he constituted Cromwell, (his master of the rolls,) a visitor general, with orders to appoint commissioners, to visit in person all religious foundations, and make enquiry in what manner the rule of the house was maintained, whether devotion was observed, good order kept, and how their revenues were expended. The commissioners appointed by Cromwell, were Richard Leighton, Thomas Lee, and William Petre, doctors of law; and Dr. John London, dean of Wallingford, with others of little name or note. Cromwell gave instructions under 86 heads of inquiry. The visitors commenced their labours the 18th of October, 1535; in conse-

quence whereof the subsequent curious document appears :—

“ Please it your Lordship to be advertised, at our
“ comyng to St. Albons on Thursday last, we be-
“ ganne a visiatcion among the monkes, the abbot
“ being then in London. And because we wolde
“ the more fully knowe the hole state of the thing,
“ taried the longer in the examination of them : and
“ upon Friday last we sent a monition for the abbot
“ to appear before us, who came hither on Saturday
“ before none ; who some we have likewise as fully
“ examined upon all things as we might. And al-
“ though, as well by the examination of the monkes,
“ as by the confession of the abbot himself, there
“ doth appear confessed and fully proved, entire
“ cause of deprivation against the abbot, not only
“ for *breaking the king's injunctions*, but also for
“ manifest dilapidations, making of giftes, negligent
“ administration, and sundry other causes ; yet by
“ what meanes we know not, in all communications
“ or motions made concerning any surrender, he
“ sheweth himself so stiff, that as he saith, he would
“ rather choyse to begge his bredde all the days of
“ his life, than consent to any surrender. We have
“ everich of us severally, and also together com-

“muned with him, and also used all fresh motions
“as we thought must most further that purpose; but
“he continueth always one man, and waxeth hourly
“*more obstinate and less conformable*: whether he
“so do upon trust and confidence of any friendship,
“we know not. The premises we thought our
“bounden duty to signifie unto your Lordship,
“most humbly beseeching the same, that we may
“know the king’s highness further pleasure by you;
“whether we shall continue in the proofs of depriva-
“tion against him, and so deprive him, *according*
“*to the order of justice, without longer delay*:
“which done, the house will be in such debt, that
“we think no man will take the office of abbot here
“upon him; except any *doo it only for the purpose*
“*to surrender* the same into the king’s hands. And
“by *these* means we think this thing may most easily
“be, and with more spede be brought to the king’s
“highness purpose.”

From hence it does appear that this abbot would not willingly become an accessory to the surrender of his possessions; but as Henry had *determined* to have the immense wealth which religious foundations would afford his sacrilegious disposition, he was not to be diverted from his purpose;

neither does it appear that abbot Robert ever temporized with the commissioners ; for "*he waxeth hourly more obstinate and less conformable.*" In the absence of all written evidence, we should conclude that he held his abbacy till his death, which occurred after he had governed eight years. He died in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Henry VIII.

It will not be doubted, we think, from the acts of this king, that he meant nothing for the promotion of Divine truth, liberty of conscience, reformation of morals, or the protection of public peace ; but to depress the church, enrich himself by this scandalous sacrilege, and gratify his own brutal nature. Notwithstanding, however, that his machinations were always tending to evil, the just providence of a benevolent God has caused evil to circumvent itself ; and from a local ill, to produce a lasting good, in the Reformation which subsequently followed.

RICHARD BOREMAN, or, as he affected to be called, DE STEVENACHE, prior of Norwich, was numerically the *forty-first* and last Abbot. He was advanced to the government of this church in anno 1598, which

he enjoyed but a short time; for, on the 5th of December, in the next year, it is recorded the abbot and convent of this monastery, *through fear*, surrendered to the king their rich monastery, with all the revenues belonging to it, by delivering the seal of the convent into the hands of *Thomas Pope, Dr. Petre, Mr. Cavendish*, and others, the king's visitors, which act is said to have afforded matter of example to many others, few enjoying that security of conscience which they dared to claim as their own. It is fully understood that Cromwell and the king availed themselves of the suggestion in the previous letter, where it is said, "we think no one will take the office here upon him, except any doo it only for the purpose of surrendering." That the present abbot was advanced for this purpose, historians do not question; but all agree in thinking, that he was made "with no other view than to make *a surrender in form.*"

Boreman had given him, for his ready compliance, an annuity of £206. 13s. 4d. or 400 marks; Kingsbury, the prior, had £33. 6s. 8d. per annum; and various small annual sums were granted to the remaining monks, thirty-nine in number.—The entire revenues of the abbey, according to Dugdale, were

£2102. 7s. 1½d.; and according to Speed, they amounted to £2510. 6s. 1½d.

Speaking of this period, and of Sir Wm. Paulet, (afterwards Lord St. John,) our historian adds, the writers of his life say, that "he lived at a time "when happened the dissolution of abbeys, which "was the harvest of estates; and that it argued "idleness if any *courtier* had his barns empty. He "was a younger brother, and came to court on "trust; where, upon the stock of his wit, he trafficked so wisely, and prospered so well, that he "got, spent, and left more money than any subject "since the conquest." He lived till 1572; died aged 97, leaving 103 descendants.

The possessions of the dissolved monastery were very quickly dispersed among the interested courtiers, who had favored the king's views. The monastic buildings, with all the ground lying round the abbey church, and the parish church of St. Andrew, which stood near the north side, were granted to Sir Richard Lee, in 1539—40. Sir Richard had scarcely obtained possession, when he began to demolish the whole. Part of the materials went to the repair and for modification of the nunnery of Sopwell, also

granted to Sir Richard; and afterwards, his chief residence. The abbey church was not included in this grant, but was held by the crown till 1553; when Edw. VI. sold it to the inhabitants of St. Albans for £400. In the charter of Incorporation, granted by the same monarch, it was enacted, that "the late parish or chapelry of St. Andrew should form part of the borough of St. Alban, and *the abbey church be called the parish church of the said borough.*"

END OF PART I.



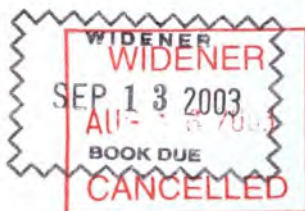


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